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PREFACE

The *Military Chaplains' Review* is designed as a medium in which those interested in the military chaplaincy can share with chaplains the product of their experience and research. We welcome articles which are directly concerned with supporting and strengthening chaplains professionally. Preference will be given to those articles having lasting value as reference material.

The *Military Chaplains' Review* is published quarterly. The opinions reflected in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Chief of Chaplains or the Department of the Army.

Articles should be submitted in duplicate, double spaced, to the Editor, Military Chaplains' Review, United States Army Chaplain Board, Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, New York 10305. Articles should be approximately 8 to 18 pages in length and, when appropriate, should be carefully footnoted.

EDITOR

Chaplain (LTC) John J. Hoogland May 1971–June 1974

Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle III July 1974–

Rx for Weak Words

"The time has come," the Walrus said, "to talk of many things: of — shoes — and ships — and sealing wax — of cabbages — and kings." Like the Walrus, we talk of many things, and how we talk about them is important, too. The words we use and the way we use them have a considerable effect upon our listeners and on ourselves. But, like any number of other things today, words are evolutionary.

We live in a world where the 7 to 11 store is open 24 hours, penny candy costs a nickel, the five and dime sells few articles under a dollar, and the *giant* economy size is the *smallest* package the soap company produces. Superlatives have stretched and distorted our everyday language so much that meaning has deteriorated.

In some early day, words may have been arrows of precision—darts thrown to convey specific meanings. Today much of our language is unfocused, fuzzy, abstract, and—even worse—empty. Some words are weak, unable to carry the freight of meaning. This happens because words and meanings change, and eventually wear out. In action-oriented America, words are not respected as highly as deeds. Besides this, people are weary of words.

Words are the chaplain's bread and butter. They are vital to practicing our profession. We try not to use stale and tasteless words—clichés—which no longer stimulate the listener's appetite, nor provide substance. Yet our professional language sometimes smacks with flabby, fuzzy words without muscle and sinew. In comparison with colorful television and Hollywood film extravaganzas, communications from pulpit or platform seem pale improvisations. As John Killinger says:

> We're competing with: the geniality of the quiz-masters, the sophistication and sartorial coolness of Johnny Carson, the studied disheveledness of Columbo, the youthful, efficient voices of newscasters, the knowledgeability of Barbara Walters, even the backdrop of color and music and stage wizardry of Oral Roberts and Garner Ted Armstrong.

Isn't there a prescription that can strengthen our words? Bill Beeners of Princeton says, "Although it's saturated with communications technology, the world may perish because of the lack of communication." Here is a paradox. We are in a world choking on an over abundant supply of nouns, verbs, and adjectives—yet hungry for one meaningful word.

We have that word. It is a word of grace and love, of faith and hope, of affirmation and acceptance.

Whatever the context (before the altar, behind the pulpit, at a staff meeting, or at home) and whatever the content (a prayer, a sermon, a report, or a conversation), our words can help and heal when they are spoken honestly. People are hungry for *honesty*. They want the truth, bitter as it may be. People are hungry for *encouragement*. Have we been communicating hope? Or have we been too critical—judgmental and unhappy. We can support and uplift with words. People are starved for *love*. John Killinger tells of a minister who really enjoys preaching. That minister says, "I regard the Sunday sermon as 20 minutes to love the people."

Lewis Caroll's Walrus was right. The time "to talk of many things" is always with us. And our "talk" will prove more powerful when we speak honestly, encouragingly and lovingly.

ORRIS E. KELLY
Chaplain (Major General), USA
Chief of Chaplains

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SOMETHING BETTER THAN A BUCKET OF WATER

John Killinger, Ph.D.

Dean Inge, the controversial British prelate, once observed that converting people by preaching a sermon to them is like trying to fill rows of narrow-necked bottles by throwing a bucket of water over them.

Every chaplain or minister knows that there is a large measure of truth in this. The gospel, while it may be stated rather simply and quickly, does not really become good news to people until it gets inside their personal situations and begins to alter the way they look at life. They must hear it existentially—in terms of their own problems, hopes, and desires. And this is the most difficult thing about preaching. It is in fact next to impossible to frame sermons in such a way that everyone in the congregation enters into the mental picture conjured up by the preacher and receives the entire message he or she is sending. Most people miss as much of the sermon as the thin-necked bottles miss of the water hurled over them.

What can we do to help the gospel become real in people's lives?

One way is through the use of groups—small aggregates of persons meeting to share separate visions of life from where they view it, and, along with the problems and frustrations which are naturally suffered in such gatherings, to talk about the meaning of Christ and religion in their lives.

In sharing groups, growth groups, or Christian sensitivity groups, the gospel is not simply thrown over people like a pail of water. Instead, it gets talked about in terms of the individual personalities of those in the groups. Vague, cliché-ridden language is ruled out. Feelings are vented and religious beliefs are articulated in precise relationship to where the members of a group are *at the very moment* of discussion.

There is enormous need, in our hyperinstitutionalized world, to personalize the gospel in this manner. More than ever before in history, individuals are sensitive to their own peculiar psychobiographies. Because of this, they tend to chafe under the depersonalizing bureaucratic structures which seem to characterize modern life.

It is ironic, of course. The truth is that most people have never been freer and more autonomous in their lives. But the level of

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awareness has been raised to such heights in our time that the same people are more conscious than ever before of the way the government, the media, and even church organizations sometimes treat them as mere registration numbers.

The same is true in the military services. The men in Caesar's army, or even Napoleon's, would be astounded at the comparative freedom enjoyed by contemporary service persons. They would shake their heads in disbelief at the rights accorded men and women in the armed forces today. Yet service persons today probably talk more about the amorphous, impersonal "they" that controls their lives than any military people before our times. It is all a matter of sensitivity.

Individuals today have *a tremendous need for person-to-person confrontation* in the more important areas of their lives. They do not want, in these areas, to be treated as part of the masses. They want individual attention. They want to say honestly how they feel about the issues affecting their lives.

There is an illustration of this in the ingenious advertisements for Popoff liquors. You remember the cartoon strip in which the detestable tycoon is lording it over his lowly young employee, telling him he shall have to forego dinner at home that night in order to be with the boss. Then, when the boss asks the young man what liquor he drinks, the young man has an opportunity to say, "Pop off, sir!"

We all want to be able to say "Pop off" to the boss, to convey our personal feelings about matters affecting us, whether the feelings are affirmative or negative. It is not enough for us to be members of an organization that professes to care for us. We want to be able to talk back, to go on record as having something personally to say.

If we don't have this opportunity, we begin to feel a little crazy, as though we were losing touch with our world. We begin to sense a kind of absurdity in life, as though we were out of phase with the rest of humanity.

Do you remember the Charlie Chaplin films? The special blend of humor and pathos in them arose from this very sense of absurdity. Chaplin was what the European tradition knows as the "Littlechap"—the innocent little fellow who always gets buffeted around by people and forces larger and more powerful than he is.

Significantly, Chaplain was a *silent* actor, unable to sit down with these people and forces and express how he felt. He was condemned to his role as "Littlechap" because there was no way of interpreting his inner self to those in power or authority above him. Nor, for that matter, was he able to communicate what he felt to many persons who weren't in power or authority. The quiet tragedy of his world was the lack of interchange in it. People were condemned to isolation.

The traditional Christian congregation, with the minister or chaplain standing in front of the people, talking down from the pulpit to them about matters of faith and belief, is a vestige of an earlier era of authority in which the word (whether secular or sacred) came down from above. It is like a tableau from a Chaplin film—say *City Lights*—in which the factory owner addresses his employees as they stand at attention, unable to talk back.

Of course there are times when congregational gatherings are both practicable and desirable. Sunday morning worship, I think, is one of these.

But people also need the opportunity for one-to-one or one-to-group confrontation. They need a chance to say who *they* are and how *they* feel about the things that vitally affect their lives. It is simply part of where we are in our consciousness pilgrimage today.

Most people have a need, too, to share information about the small, personal things in their lives—the foods they like, the poets they read, the soap operas they watch, the flowers they grow, the fears they have, the dreams they entertain, and all the rest.

I have related in my book *All You Lonely People, All You Lovely People* how one shy young woman began to speak in a group one night by saying, "I hope you will all forgive me for sharing my trivia with you, but—" and how one of the men present said to her that he hoped she would always feel free to share her trivia, as she had put it, and that he wanted to feel free always to share his, because otherwise people never really get to know each other.

That is true, isn't it? We don't really know each other on the basis of the major decisions we have made, or the political parties we are affiliated with, or even the religious beliefs we say we espouse. All of these help, of course. But often it is the small things in our lives that are the key to who we are and to what our personalities are really like.

I know a great orchestra leader whose secret passion is making bread. To thousands of people, he is identified with the tremendous music he gets out of the musicians on a stage in a concert hall. But I know that he is never more himself than when he has his hands in a bucket of fresh dough, kneading it and tossing it and preparing it for the oven. Then he is in an expansive mood, like a child, and says what is uppermost in his mind and heart.

I have a friend who is a clothing merchant. All day long he greets people in his store, and talks to them of cloth and style and the prices of garments. To the people who see him there, that is what he is—a merchant. But I happen to know that he curls up every night with a Sherlock Holmes story, and relives the adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle's famous hero. It is one of the most important things in his life.

Then he gladly forgets his store and the talk about fashions, and lives in the pattern of the great sleuth.

One of the finest chaplains I have ever known, who was head of all the chaplains in his branch of service in the Orient, was indescribably fond of antiques, especially grandfather clocks. Now that he has retired from the service, he has started a business for the reproduction of old furniture. Through all those years when his career said he was one thing, he was really dreaming of being another.

Most people are like that. There are secret ambitions, secret prejudices, secret apprehensions in them that are often far more important clues to who they are than all the things that appear on the surface about them.

The world we live in appears increasingly to deal in generalities. Maybe it has to. With the population continuing to enlarge geometrically in the poorer nations, there are millions more persons to deal with every week. Things naturally have to be computerized. People lose their identities as individuals and become ciphers. The logistics of human organization have become so complex, both socially and economically, that programming is essential.

But people still need to share their trivia. Their true identities are bound up in their trivia, in the little things that make life meaningful and graceful to them. And being able to share these in a Christian context, so that they are viewed as part of what the Jews call *shalom* and we call *the fullness of life*, does something to increase the joy of our faith. We feel then that the gospel is related to all of life, and we understand the fuller meaning of *incarnation*, of God's being involved in flesh and matter and all that is.

It is the relevance of the gospel to our trivia that keeps faith from becoming gnostic, from being spiritualized into other-worldliness. And the group, far better than the large congregation at worship, is able to point to this relevance.

Finally, groups are more adept than large congregations at providing *the personal affirmation* that people need.

When we try to preach the gospel from the pulpit, we tell people that God loves them and wants the best for them. We tell them that he accepts them as they are, that he doesn't hold their mistakes against them, and that he is ready to help them in the struggle for a more meaningful life.

But how much more effective it is when the same people hear the same message not from the pulpit but from each other, and when God's acceptance of them is made more real through acceptance in a group. We all want God's acceptance. But how much richer it seems to us when we feel affirmation from other persons, too.

Acceptance, after all, is something better conveyed through action than through words. Imagine a parent whose child has done something to merit disapproval. The parent says, "That's all right. I'm going to forget about that." Whether the child believes the parent or not depends as much on the parent's tone of voice and body language as on what the parent says. If the voice is grudging and the posture rigid, the child will probably keep his or her distance from the parent, despite the protestations of forgiveness.

In the same way, hearing a preacher say from the pulpit that God affirms who I am does not purchase as much credibility with me as having two or three persons put their arms around me, tell me I'm a great guy and that they enjoy being with me. The gospel reaches us better through the positive behavior of other Christians than it does in mere speech.

In Thomas Harris' phraseology, we all need the assurance from other persons that we are OK, despite our weaknesses and imperfections, and that it is OK to be who we are. We need to know that it is OK even if we are failures in life—if we didn't raise our children properly, if we didn't make colonel or vice-president of the company, if we didn't provide handsomely enough for our families.

God accepts us despite such inadequacies. But we can accept our own acceptance better if we feel that other persons, like ourselves, accept them too.

It isn't a matter of cheap grace. It is instead a matter of human psychology. Most of us cannot even begin to improve from what we are until we sense a measure of acceptance of who we are. We cannot give our best to God until we feel secure and affirmed, and are released from crippling tensions within. It is a fact that people work better when they feel good about themselves than they do when reminded that they are inferior or incompetent. Similarly, people live more easily by the teachings of Christ when they have been encouraged by others that they are already acceptable as they are.

Here is a simple example. A friend of mine confessed in a group that he truly longed to be a more generous person. He cited instances in which he had been unable to act with the spontaneous generosity he admired in other people. The group did not gloss over the problem he felt he had by assuring him that he was already generous. But it did assure him that his feelings were perfectly normal, and that he was a very decent fellow in spite of this flaw in his nature. Encouraged by this acceptance, he was able to report a few weeks later that he had behaved much more spontaneously since the night of his confession, and was continuing to make improvements.

By affirming him, the group had made grace more real to him—had brought it out of the realm of the abstract into the realm of real

experience—and had thereby enabled him to live the Christian life more easily. He had first heard of this grace from the pulpit. But the concrete embodiment of it in his friends was what really empowered him to rely on it and enjoy it in his daily actions.

This is the vital service performed by groups. They give flesh and blood to the realities we have preached and taught for years. They *incarnate* the gospel.

There is nothing especially new about groups, of course. As Thomas Oden has shown in his study, *The Intensive Group Experience*, Methodism, Hasidic Judaism, and certain pietistic sects in Germany had already developed forerunners of the modern groups as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The language with which John Wesley encouraged his "classes" to be open with one another, to express their feelings, and to encourage one another bears striking similarities to the present-day language of Fritz Perls, William Schutz, Carl Rogers, and other advocates of groups.

But, more than ever before, groups are "an idea whose time has come." We are able to see objectively the considerable benefits which their procedures and advantages afford in the kind of bureaucratically structured, impersonal world we live in. Every pastor and chaplain should be open to the use of group techniques in his or her congregation. Not every parishioner will be ready to join a group, of course. But for some it will seem like the salvation they have been waiting for.

And let's be frank about it. For exploring the nitty-gritty ramifications of the gospel we preach, for eliciting the feelings of people in the congregation and restating our message in "retail" rather than "wholesale," it is a lot better than trying to fill narrow-necked bottles by throwing pails of water over them!

CREDIBILITY AND THE MINISTER

B. F. Jackson, Jr., Ph.D.

What does research have to say to the clergyman who desires to be an effective advocate using the medium of oral communication? What does this mean for the minister who wants to use the sermon as a medium for advocacy?

The church through the centuries has often played the role of advocate. This has not changed today although the church and its leaders may find this role different.

One of the reasons that the advocacy role of the church is different today is that there are numerous other institutions also at work on some of the same important tasks. For instance, in the area of race relations many ministers and laymen would like to bring about change. Clergy and laity have often banded themselves together with the result that proposals have been made to integrate institutions, including churches, to relieve some of the inequities and injustices of minority races. Now the church is one of many institutions at work on these changes.

To use the same example of race relations, let's imagine a context in which the minister has decided to be the advocate of better race relations in the community. In this case, let us assume that the minister has decided to go beyond vague statements and attempts seriously to persuade his congregation to act on two related issues: (1) The need and desirability of persons in the congregation to work toward making the neighborhood, where the church is located, one in which integrated housing is possible. (2) The positive step among the persons of the congregation to decide that members of all races will be welcome as full-fledged members of the church.

In order to consider the situation the minister faces as realistically as possible, we will make several additional assumptions. First, we will assume that the leaders and many of the members of the congregation are reasonably open to persuasion on the issues under consideration. The geographical region in which the church is located and the background of most of the people is such that they are at least willing to listen and consider the ideas of the minister.

Second, we will assume that the minister has made careful preparation over a period of time for the advocacy of his position by doing extensive research into the position of the Scriptures on the subject,

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and by tracing the ideas he wishes to present down through history until the present day. Finally, we will assume that the minister has real skill in sermonizing. He organizes his thoughts carefully and states his ideas with conviction and fearless courage.

Since we have so carefully and favorably stacked the cards, the chances of success seem unusually high. This may be, but for the purpose of our discussion we will ask, Is there an additional factor? Will the dimension of credibility which we have examined above be the additional ingredient which may cause a given minister to succeed or fail in his advocacy?

Our view is that credibility will prove to be one of the most important factors in this communication event. This is not to hold that the credibility of the minister is more important than the careful preparation of his sermon or numerous other factors. Rather, we hold that this one ingredient in the communication event may be sufficiently important to weight the scales in favor of success or failure.

To review, it is here held that research has convincingly shown that at least three dimensions of credibility are very important in a situation like this.

First, will the minister during his sermon be perceived as a *competent* authority on the subject under consideration? From what we have said about the careful preparation over a period of time, our minister may have a fair chance of being accepted as competent on the subject. We need to remember, however, that we described this congregation as one already fairly open and friendly to his position. This would probably mean they would expect him to go much beyond the position which was already held by most of them, thus showing his real competence to be beyond that which most of them could claim.

Second, will the minister, through his sermon, be perceived as *trustworthy* and safe to follow on this issue which in so many American communities is a "red flag" issue?

Third, will the minister be perceived by those hearing his sermon to have *dynamism;* that is, the disposable energy available to emphasize, augment, and finally help implement the suggestions which he is advocating?

We see that this kind of discussion takes us far beyond the bland statement that credibility is a static attitude of a person to the view that it should be defined in terms of the listener's perception, rather than in terms of fixed objective characteristics of the person speaking.

What do we know about the probable perceptions of people as they relate to credibility as competence, as trustworthiness, and as dynamism? Research has shown that the first two of these dimen-

sions of credibility are frequently independent of each other.

These two dimensions are often easier to perceive in two separate persons, than to be present and embodied all in one personality. For example, a minister may be perceived, by many who hear him preach, as quite competent on the subject at hand. He may be seen as a thorough and well-trained scholar on what the Scriptures have to say regarding proper race relations. He may be considered fully informed and highly qualified to interpret history on this issue. And, highly important to the more sophisticated listener, he may be accepted as one who has competence in interpreting the psychological and sociological implications of his ideas. But it does not follow that he will also be perceived as a trustworthy person whose ideas are safe to follow.

A considerable body of research indicates that a person who is perceived as trustworthy does not necessarily have to be thought of as highly competent or vice versa. The dimension of trustworthiness, as perceived by a given group of people, is somewhat more intangible. It may be hard to explain, but is very important in all human relations. As is quite evident in countless examples in history, people are often misled in their perceptions of trustworthiness. Such different national leaders as Hitler, Churchill, and De Gaulle were considered as trustworthy by large groups of people in their own nation, even though their ideas might not be acceptable elsewhere.

This is an appropriate place to point out that credibility is not a *thing*, and most of all it is not a good or a bad thing. The good or bad depends upon the context, on the ideals and ultimate character of the person in whom confidence is placed. It should be easy to see, that from our perspective Hitler's high credibility with the German people was ultimately a very evil thing. Because of this high credibility Hitler was able to lead the German people to near destruction of their nation and to near destruction of the world. But this is from our viewpoint not from theirs. He had very high credibility with a majority of the German people until very near the end.

The important thing to remember is that the dimensions of credibility are not static attributes of a person, but are perceptions that are subject to change in the minds of the perceivers.

If the first two dimensions, competence and trustworthiness are often independent of one another, what about the third dimension of dynamism? To review what was reported earlier as the results of research, dynamism seems to be statistically independent of the trustworthy and competence dimensions, but the relative instability of dynamism suggests that it may not be psychologically independent of the other two factors. Rather, the dynamism dimension is to be conceived as an *intensifier*.

Thus, it seems evident that no matter how competent or trustworthy the clergyman is perceived to be in his sermon, this is not enough unless he appears to have sufficient energy available to enable him to carry through his suggestions. The question is: Does he have the drive to see things through, to do what he says he will? Talking about drive is difficult, but to see drive in a great leader is easy. The energy to see things through, to get a job done even when one is dead tired—these are some of the criteria by which people judge whether a person has the dimension of dynamism.

Research increasingly indicates that at least these three dimensions of credibility are very important if a minister in his sermon is to be believed and followed by his parishioners.

CREDIBILITY IN PRACTICE

Several suggestions are made to the minister who desires to enhance his credibility:

1. Since the dimensions of competence and trustworthiness are frequently not perceived as being equally present in the same person, it follows that a minister ought to determine, as far as possible, his relative strength and weakness in these two dimensions.

Lest a person be overly fearful of hurting his own self-confidence, remember that *perceived* competence or trustworthiness are *not* necessarily equal to actual competence or trustworthiness. However, this does not lessen the importance of what is perceived by those who are in the congregation when a sermon is being preached.

We have already referred to the scales of measurement that are beginning to be available to the minister who wants to know how his credibility dimensions are perceived by a given group. We need to remember that one's credibility is not necessarily the same in two different groups. The serious student of this subject is directed to the article which formally reports the research to which I have referred throughout this chapter.[1] A growing number of social scientists and communication specialists are developing skills that can help churchmen in finding ways of measuring their own dimensions of credibility.

If a minister finds that he is perceived as weak in competence (as clergymen often are) and strong in trustworthiness, then what can he do? He can be thankful, for one thing, because it will probably be easier for him to improve his competence if people perceive him as trustworthy, than if it were the opposite case. We doubt that persons will continue to come to hear a minister in whom they do not have a

[1] D. Berlo, J. Lemert, and R. Mertz, "Dimensions for Evaluating the Acceptability of Message Sources," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Winter, 1970.

high degree of trust. However, this is not enough, and too many ministers take advantage of our trust rather than work to improve their competence.

2. Some clergymen who have worked hard to be as competent as possible may have neglected sharing their knowledge and ability to interpret experience, with a trusted group of opinion leaders. If a minister can spend more time with such leaders, sometimes they will do much to interpret his competence to their friends. The influence of a sermon is often determined when people discuss, after church, what the minister said in church.

3. Another suggestion is made for those churches that have a multiple ministry. Here an attempt can be made to select ministers who can compliment each other on the dimensions of trustworthiness and competence. This obviously cannot be accomplished unless the ministers are willing to allow one person to play a prominent role while the other takes a back seat. This takes real trust and willingness to be a part of a team. But it should allow persons to learn from each other as well as bring out the best in one another.

4. Where the above is not possible, a clergyman may be wise to seek a layman in his congregation who has a high degree of either of the dimensions in which the minister has demonstrated his weakness. If such a layman is not readily found within the congregation, persons outside the congregation can be found to assist the pastor. This is quite often done.

Any of these alternatives may enable a team of persons to be used as components in building an image of credibility for the pulpit and for the church.

5. The associations and organizations a minister belongs to and is active in may have a great deal to do with increasing his credibility. Obviously, this factor can work both positively and negatively.

6. It is important for the minister to know about the membership groups to which his congregation belongs. By knowing what these groups stand for, a minister may make reference to their beliefs in a helpful way. Also, references to authorities in whom his congregation has confidence can be valuable.[2]

7. We would be remiss if we did not mention what has been called "persuasion by character." The sermon is one of the many contacts which ministers have with their parishioners. The sermon does not begin when the minister stands up to address his people at a given hour on Sunday morning. The sermon begins long before, as he spends time in getting acquainted with his people, as he attempts to

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[2] Some of the ideas expressed above were stimulated by Erwin P. Bettinghaus' book, *Persuasive Communication*, pp. 118–120.

serve them in their time of illness and health, as he attempts to undergird and back up not only his members but all persons in need. In this area of nonverbal experience with his people, pastoral credibility grows significantly. Quite often, in these day-to-day experiences, parishioners will have the opportunity to see their minister as he really is.

For the clergyman or church leader who is truly concerned with effective advocacy through oral communication, these three variables of credibility: competence, trustworthiness, and dynamics should be seriously considered.

THE LANGUAGES OF PREACHING

J. Randall Nichols, Ph.D.

In most denominations every minister keeps a biographical dossier on file in the headquarters office, for use by pastoral search committees, public relations people and the like. The dossier form for my own group asks at one point: "In how many languages can you preach?" Most of us answer "One." And most of us are wrong.

The fact is, communication in preaching is such a complex experience that to understand it we would do much better to think of several "languages" being spoken even in what seems like ordinary English preaching. Just for openers: there is the language of formal theology ("God's grace forgives sin"), the language of religious experience ("We felt free, in touch with God's presence"), the language of illustration, the language of history, the language of the Bible, the language of everyday happening, the language of feeling, and of course the non-verbal language of the body. Like the colored wires of a telephone cable, they are all wrapped up in what *seems* like one thing—plain (hopefully) English.

But the preacher, like the telephone man, has to make the right connections so communication can take place the way he wants it to, and heaven help him if green gets spliced to red! Knowing about the different strands and what each does can get to be pretty important. That is our concern in this article: learning a little about the different languages of preaching so we can communicate better in the pulpit—and so we can understand what happened when it does not always work the way we hoped!

I.

Let me use a true story with several different meanings to get us into the subject. It was told by a colleague of mine who was for many years senior chaplain at a large state mental hospital. One of his saddest "back ward" cases was a Greek schizophrenic, hopelessly out of touch with reality, who had been vegetating in the hospital for years. No one quite knew where the patient had come from, and since it was agreed that he was beyond helping, no one paid much attention to him. The chaplain finally arranged for a local Greek Orthodox priest in the community to visit the poor fellow, as much for giving him a chance to speak his native tongue as for pastoral reasons.

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The priest, who was clinically trained, returned somewhat shaken from the visit, and nervously asked the chaplain, "What in the world is that fellow doing there? He's as healthy as you and I!" Bit by bit, the story was pieced together after all those years. The Greek "schizophrenic" was a sailor who had jumped ship long ago in a nearby port. He had spoken no English at all, had gotten into some sort of trouble, and as still sometimes happens despite our best intentions was clapped into the mental institution. There he slowly learned English. *But he learned his English from schizophrenic patients!* Now certain language misuse is often characteristic of that form of mental dysfunction, almost diagnostically so. Our poor Greek, therefore, managed to learn completely schizophrenic English. To the English-speaking psychiatrists and workers he sounded (and in fact acted) schizophrenic, and was every bit as removed from reality as his sickest fellow patients. But. . . .

The Greek Orthodox priest had conversed with him in Greek, something which had never happened before in the hospital, *and when he spoke Greek the man was perfectly normal!* It can be fairly said that the hospital staff was both humbled and taught by the experience; the Greek "patient," in his turn, was released. I offer that as an illustration of the way language and "reality" are intertwined, to the extent that what sense we make both *of* the world and *to* other people depends heavily on the languages we speak. Crazy in English, sane in Greek.

The same thing happens with preachers, by the way, whose sanity is unquestioned, but who, theologically speaking, become different people altogether when they begin to preach. Let us take the case (again an actual one, suitably disguised) of a Dr. Wordbinder. He is a well-trained clergyman who has kept up his thinking and reading, and comes across as very much "on target" theologically. He speaks of the power of the Gospel to set men free for deep relationship to God and to their brothers; he understands the dynamics of love and forgiveness in the full interplay of human emotions; his theology is firmly rooted in the live human experience of openness, mystery, and servanthood which discipleship involves.

But in the pulpit he becomes a theological throwback. His sermons are long, rambling, and obese with theological jargon. His style is alternately aggressive and whining; his illustrations reinforce the most banal pietism of oversimplification. His use of the Bible, despite what he believes and knows, is literalistic, authoritarian, and repressive. His problem, to intermingle our illustrations, is that the green wire got connected to the red one, and the poor man is "sane in Greek" but "crazy in English." The language of his preaching not only conveys a different message from his conviction, it involves his

listeners in a totally different view of reality—God, man, the forces of existence—than he believes or wants to share.

The tragedy is that Dr. Wordbinder's heartfelt purpose in preaching has been subverted by his languages. It is not his sermon organization or his elocution or his feelings that are getting in the way; it is his language itself. (Dr. Wordbinder is a more serious case of the type who scowls and growls his way through a sermon on love, or the one who thoroughly depresses his whole congregation with a mournful lament about how we have lost our sense of joy!)

All I am saying so far can be summed up in a kind of formula: LANGUAGE HAS THE POWER TO SHAPE EXPERIENCE. And to elaborate a bit: if different kinds of experience need to be expressed through different kinds of language, then it is also true that different languages have the power to shape different experiences.

The preacher ought to be interested in that interplay between language and experience, since by "speaking" different languages in his preaching he in fact is contributing to his people's having correspondingly different experiences of the Gospel. Witness our friend Dr. Wordbinder, for whom the experience of Christian faith was personally alive and meaningful, but whose pulpit language contributed to a far different experience for his listeners—the farthest thing from the sharing he intended.

But how does a preacher check up on his various languages? How does he know if the red and green wires are connected right or not—if his language and his preaching are "congruent," to use a pastoral concept? Dr. Wordbinder, for instance, probably senses that something is askew in his preaching, but the chances are good he does not know what it is. Can we help him? Yes, I think so. I think preachers can learn to be aware of the languages of their preaching, and to monitor them in order to use them consistently, intentionally, and effectively. It is time to move from our basic point—that language and the experience of reality are intertwined—to the question of using languages appropriately for the purposes we really intend.

II.

To keep the discussion straight, let us think in terms of two concepts: "connectedness" and "context." For effective preaching I suggest that the languages of preaching must be appropriately connected (to the experience they shape) and consistent with their context. If we either disconnect or decontextualize them, we are in trouble. If we keep them straight, we ought to be well on the way to doing in preaching what we aim to do as prophets and priests.

The concept of connectedness grows out of some of the most significant work ever done in the area of language development, the ear-

liest research of the famed Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Piaget conducted an experiment with young children ranging in age from four to twelve, in order to determine how their skill in understanding and using language grew. He told his young subjects a simple fairy story, then asked them to re-tell the same story to others. An eight-year-old, for instance, fed back a garbled version of the story which seemed to indicate he had understood little of it. But when the eight-year-old was questioned in detail about the story it was equally clear that he understood it perfectly! What happened?

The problem, Piaget diagnosed, was that the child's "style of talking" was not yet keeping pace with his understanding; he quite literally knew more than he could say. The child would omit parts of the story, reverse sexes of characters, interchange roles, and invert sequences of events. The only way you could make sense of his report was to know the story yourself in advance. The child himself could not be relied on to sense and appreciate what his listener would naturally not know, even though he himself understood the story fully. He could not connect his language with the "experience" of understanding which he wanted to shape in the hearer. Specifically, the child lacked the ability to "assume the listener's perspective," and so his re-telling of the story could be deciphered only if a hearer knew the story to begin with.[1]

The same thing happens every day with adults—more subject to momentary lapses than to developmental failure—who tell stories, relate incidents, or make requests but leave out essential ingredients. We have all heard perfectly good anecdotes hopelessly butchered in the telling by people who seemed to assume, unthinkingly, that their hearers already knew some of the most important lines.

Translated into our present discussion, that is a problem of "missed connections" in communication. The language is not adequately connected to the experience it tries to shape, because the speaker has not adequately assumed the perspective of his listeners. Let's come a little closer to home: I would argue that for preachers a classic and recurring case of missed connections of exactly that sort is the misuse of theological language in preaching. Theological language is "code" for certain kinds of religious experience coupled with theological interpretation. If one does not already know about the experience or the interpretation, the code makes no sense; the connection between the language and the experience is missed, just as Piaget's children missed the connection between their language and the meaning-experience of the story.

To illustrate: imagine a preacher who wants to share with his lis-

[1] Howard Gardner, *The Quest for Mind* (New York, 1972) p. 66.

teners the experience of a felt acceptance and hopeful security in spite of life's setbacks and injustices. He wants to shape an experience of acceptance, or at least the envisioning of one, but in his preaching he uses not the language of experience but the language of theology: grace, unmerited divine love, suffering atonement for our sin, "coming to Jesus," "leaving all masters for God," and so forth, depending on his theological style. Unfortunately, those theological fragments all require one to know something already about the experience of acceptance before they make any sense as language. Or, to put it another way, a preacher who uses that kind of language may assume he is describing an actual human experience—past or future—when in fact the language does not *describe* at all. It *interprets* certain happenings and feelings, whose description may very well be the missing link of the sermon! The theological language gets connected to thin air—or worse, to itself.

We really cannot have it both ways: we cannot require prior experience of what we want to communicate in order to communicate it. (I never understood the meaning of the old saying "You can't make a cake without breaking eggs" until I started trying to understand how language works. This seems to be it: you cannot make language work until you "break it open" and understand what connections with experience and with other language are needed to make it work. If you leave language "whole," which is what happens when we use theological language when what we really want is the language of experience, we miss the connections necessary for making sense and shaping experience.)

Paiget's discovery was crucial for the preacher: to communicate effectively requires that the communicator be able to assume the listener's perspective (which, by the way, is almost never that of formal theology or even biblical imagery), to take his role, in order to know what connections have to be made in the message. Unfortunately, a lot of preaching is in the same category as the badly told anecdote with its missing links. Some examples:

— raising an emotional question but providing an intellectual answer;

— using biblical texts to prove a point without saying why they are authoritative for us (if they are!);

— calling for decision without recognizing what choices we are deciding among;

— giving an illustration but not saying what it illustrates;

— arguing for the importance of an "answer" without saying what was the importance of the question;

— switching event sequences so that God's action has no stated relationship to human need;

— using theological abstractions as though they were concrete, witnessable events (God's will, forgiveness, divine mercy or judgment, etc.);

— assuming an unstated understanding of faith in order to persuade people to make a commitment of faith—or vice versa.

When adults consistently *can not* take the role of another, we call it a form of character disorder; when preachers consistently *do not* do it, it is just bad preaching. Listeners come away with the frustrating feeling they should know something they do not, and the Gospel in its full, lived sense remains one of the church's best kept secrets.

What to do about it? Two suggestions. First, a preacher should go through his sermon thoroughly and ask himself over and over again, "What am I assuming my listener already knows or has experienced in order for this to make sense?" The results may surprise you. (They will also force you to take very seriously the individual characteristics of different audiences. What is assumable for one audience may not be for another.) Second, a preacher should go through his sermon and search religiously for biblical and theological language, "God-talk," and then *paraphrase in ordinary language each and every instance of it.* Notice I do not say "de-theologize" it, but rather translate it into common, non-religious speech. In short, you have got to break the eggs. Poor Dr. Wordbinder, you will recall, could not bring himself to do that. When he climbed into the pulpit he left behind his ability to take the role of his listeners, and his language got disconnected from the experience of the Gospel he desperately wanted to shape.

But what happens when you go through your sermon and discover that you simply cannot translate your theological language into the language of experience? What if you cannot get the eggs broken no matter what? Then you may have a particular kind of communication malady, the problem of "verbal realism," and it is wider spread than you might think.

As human beings develop from an infantile to a more mature understanding of the world they make an important, though usually unnoticed, discovery: *words and things are different.* That is to say, the sign of a thing or of an event is not the same thing as the thing or event itself—something most of us would yawningly agree to as among the most obvious of everyday assumptions. For the child, though, and sometimes for adults in certain ways, it is not only *not* an obvious assumption, it is not even true: word and thing *are* the same!

That mixup is called "verbal realism," the confusing business of thinking that a word itself carries or contains the reality of the thing it represents. For ready-to-hand examples you can tune into the conversation of very young children. For instance, my three-year-old

son is quite concerned about robbers. The family car was broken into and its contents stolen recently, and my son's preoccupation with robbery was all the more intensified. He talked about robbers at great length, demanding to know why they stole, how we could be safe from them, what kinds of people they were, and so forth. Suddenly in the midst of conversation he stopped short, thought seriously for a few minutes, and then asked in a very worried way: "If we *talk* about robbers, will robbers *come*?" Over and over again we assured him that talking about robbers would not make them come—all to no avail. (The next day some progress had been made: he announced to the family that robbers would come only if we talked about them *a lot*! Some verbose preachers seem to have found the same solution for the Kingdom of God.) For the three-year-old there is not much distance between the talking and the happening—he is in the middle of "verbal realism."

Vestiges of verbal realism hang on even into adult life. All too many adults, for instance, carry traces of the conviction that feeling or thinking something "inside" carries the same consequences as making it happen in the real world outside; negative or tabooed feelings are therefore dangerous and to be avoided. That trace of verbal realism is a common hurdle to be overcome in various forms of psychotherapy and counselling. Feeling that you want to murder your wife—or supervisor—is all right; acting on it is another matter!

Another trace of verbal realism brings us squarely into the preacher's concern: when a religious person cannot separate a theological word from the experience, object, or event the word represents, then we may describe him as a literalist or a fundamentalist. In fact, he is a "verbal realist," at least in the theological domain of his thinking. When you have trouble translating theological language into the language of experience, when you cannot get the eggs broken, you can suspect that the problem is a form of verbal realism.

Now the main trouble with that is simply that the verbal realist is a prisoner of his language. It is probably not overdoing it to say he lives in a world of words, and lacks the freedom to experience creatively and redemptively either the events of the real world or for that matter the communicative power of language. Langdon Gilkey, for instance, argues quite persuasively that when we lose meaningful "God-talk" we in time lose the actual experience of transcendence because we lose the power to hold the experience up linguistically for reflection and interpretation. He believes that when we no longer can "thematize" experience in language, soon the experience itself atrophies and dies.[2]

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[2] *Naming the Whirlwind: The Renewal of God-Language* (Indianapolis, 1969).

The theological verbal realist has lost such meaningful theological language just as surely as the rampaging agnostic who does not talk about ultimate things at all. Dr. Wordbinder might be frightened to hear it, but in fact he is close to losing touch with the vitality of his own experience of God's love in Jesus Christ—and his language is the culprit. When he loses the ability to distinguish the word from the thing, he has tragically lost the creative power of both language and experience.

To come back now to the mainstream of the discussion, the verbal realist has lost the appropriate connectedness between the language of his preaching and the experience he wants to shape. The connections he makes tend to be from language *to more language*, as witness the preacher who is asked what "trusting the love of Jesus Christ" *means* experientially, and replies that it means something like "depending on the grace of God"—connecting language with more language, but not with live experience.

But what good *is* theological language, then? Surely there is some appropriate connection to make between theological language and the experience shaped by communication. Should we stop using God-talk in preaching? Well, yes and no. To the Dr. Wordbinders of the world I would come close to saying: Yes, I am telling you to stop using God-talk, at least until you rediscover what the appropriate use of such language is. I am quite convinced, you see, that the verbal realism of the abstractionist or the literalist is one main barrier to redemptive religious experience, certainly through preaching. The two chief founders who come to mind on that score are at what you would normally think of as opposite ends of the field—the abstruse theological professor and the evangelistic preacher (who is equally abstract in his own way, though he usually would be the first to deny it! There is nothing "concrete" or even very human about theological formulas and uninterpreted Bible-quoting.). To the Dr. Wordbinders I would be tempted to suggest a moratorium on talking directly about God until they have learned both the power and the limitations of talking, period.

But to the rest of us there is something more to be said, which takes us to the other concept I have in mind for discussing the languages of preaching: context.

III.

I define "context" as follows, which turns out to be the ordinary understanding of the word with one added ingredient. The context of language in preaching is the experiential "story" *unfolding in the mind of the listener* in terms of which the language makes sense. The added ingredient of that definition is the "unfolding in the mind of the

listener" part, which means simply that for preaching to be adequately "in context" it must become part of "my story," as a listener would put it.

It is not unusual to think of sermons as telling a story—the story of redemption, the story of the Bible, the story of Christian faith, the story of God's love in Jesus Christ, and so on. I am just taking that a step further: the context of language in preaching, from the listener's perspective, is always *my* story—no matter how flawed or fragmented—even if it is my story of redemption, my story of the Bible, my story of Christian faith, or my story of God's love in Jesus Christ.

When a message begins, a kind of mental search mission starts in the mind of the hearer. From his vast internal computer of stored experience comes a set of meanings, images, and previous understandings to which the unfamiliar incoming message is referred for translation, so to speak. That is the "story," like the accompaniment roll of a player piano or a film clip backing up the commentary of the evening T.V. news. As soon as that happens—which takes something like a billionth of a second, as a rule—communication has become essentially a receiver phenomenon. The meaning of the message is not "transmitted," as we sometimes mistakenly say; it is, so to speak, "trans-generated" in the awareness of the hearer, reassembled in the context of his own story.

Let me use my three-year-old again to illustrate. A few months ago this highly verbal little person developed a rather fantastic sense of his own history. Every time he was told something about what was happening, or what something meant, or what someone else had said—the usual daily agenda of conversation with the under-four-foot set—the child would instantly reply by saying, "When *I* was a little boy I would. . . ." and then replay whatever it was that had just been told him. If we said to him, "Look at that Dalmation dog over there in the fire station," he would reply without missing a beat, "When I was a little boy I had a Dalmation dog and he. . . ." at which point we would be off on a fictionalized autobiographical tour which could go on interminably!

What was happening? The three-year-old was not making something up; it never occurred to him to make a distinction between actual, historical report and clever fantasy—they were all the same. The reason they were all the same was quite simply that he was taking in what we told him and transforming it into *his story*, no matter how far-fetched that seemed to the adult mind. To him it made perfect sense; it was a good way of appropriating information in terms of his own existence. The instant-replay autobiography was a way of making sense of our adult language by weaving it into an experiential

story unfolding in his own mind. It was a way of giving language a context, without which it would make no sense.

Now as we become adult we become a good deal more sophisticated—we develop senses of time, reversability, facticity, and so forth—but we never stop what the three-year-old was so obviously doing: making sense of language by translating it into his unfolding story of existence. If the incoming communication does not easily fit the unfolding story, we will try our hardest to make it fit, even to the extent of completely reversing the speaker's intended significance! If all else fails we will sometimes abandon the effort altogether and stop listening. Usually what happens with communication is somewhere in between: the incoming message is partly appropriated into our unfolding stories, with or without distortion, and our stories themselves partly accomodate themselves to the incoming message. When the experience is over, neither the message nor our inner story is quite what it started out to be, and in that interplay is the dynamic of the communication process.

What we are saying, then, is that communication breaks down when language is decontextualized—when it no longer makes sense to the unfolding inner story which the listener uses as a mental stage on which the words he hears are actors. To illustrate, suppose we ask a normal human being to take a little word test. We give him a list of words—"paper," "ink," and "pen"—and ask him to define the last one. He will reply, most likely, by saying that a pen is a writing instrument, or words to that effect. If we give him another list of words—"cattle," "barn," and "pen"—and again ask him to define the last, he will most likely reply that a pen is an enclosure for cattle, or something like that. We can do the same thing, mixing up the lists, with hundreds of normal people, and the results will be generally the same, as everyone would expect. The context established by the first two words determines the meaning of the third in that communication instance.

But suppose we give the same test to an emotionally disturbed person whose illness leads us to diagnose him as "schizophrenic." Strangely enough, with a schizophrenic person there is no telling what the response will be! "Pen" meaning "writing instrument" may be related to the cattle-barn sequence as often as it is to the paper-ink list, and vice versa. That finding has led researchers to conclude that schizophrenic patients are characteristically unresponsive to the context of their own or others' speech.[3] Language for them has been

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[3] Brendan Maher, "Language and Psychopathology" in George A. Miller ed., *Communication, Language, and Meaning: Psychological Perspectives* (New York, 1973), pp. 258 ff.

decontextualized and they are unable to relate it to an unfolding inner story in order to make sense of it.

Listen now to a quotation about communication from the listener's point of view:

> When people talk to me it's like a different kind of language. It's too much to hold at once. My head is overloaded and I can't understand what they say. It makes you forget what you've just heard because you can't get hearing it long enough. It's all in different bits which you have put together again in your head.[4]

My hunch is that those words could easily be the reaction of a lot of people to a lot of preaching, with its theological jargon, its heaviness, and its abstraction from ongoing experience. In fact, however, the quotation is from a schizophrenic patient describing what it feels like when people talk to him!

All of which leads to the conclusion: when the language of preaching cannot be contextualized and made into "my story," it becomes as meaningless and disorganized to a listener as ordinary speech does to a schizophrenic patient. Schizophrenic preaching? Perhaps we should not go quite that far, but the connection with psychopathology does underscore the need for awareness of linguistic context in preaching—the need, as I would rather put it, for preaching to be the unfolding story of our deepest yearning and experience of redemption, told chapter by chapter so that it becomes in every true and saving sense "our story."

I suspect we preachers are often guilty of a failure of nerve when it comes to putting sermons together. On the one hand we profess to believe in the sacramental work of God, bringing the whole of creation into the arena of redemption, *starting* with the ordinary, nonreligious phenomena of human experience. God became man in Jesus Christ to make that point: the drama of salvation goes on in the marketplace, not the temple. But when we begin to preach we do not quite trust our theology. We try to make the work of God start, so far as communication is concerned, with religious things; theological topics, biblical passages, church experiences, religious language, articles of faith, and so on.

God chose to work in the context of our human stories; preachers have a way of turning the tables, as though they were trying to turn human experience into theology rather than show God's love penetrating human experience! The result is that we decontextualize our language—or worse, we force our hearers to decontextualize it (perhaps out of respect for poor Dr. Wordbinder who is such a decent fellow even if he doesn't say anything recognizably human in the pul-

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 260.

pit). That is not only bad communication, it is bad theology. That "the word became flesh and dwelt among us" ought to be the most damning indictment of theological verbal realism.

I believe we are now in a position, however, to suggest at least one way in which theological language—whose misuse I have criticized so heavily—does find an appropriate role as one of the languages of preaching. If theological language is not a way of *telling* the story of our experience, it may on the other hand be a way of later *reflecting upon* that story. It may be a way of giving our own story a family relationship with the similar stories of other men of faith past and present. To use Gilkey's idea, theological language may be a way of identifying and preserving the "theme" of our religious experience.

Perhaps we can draw much of this into a conclusion by imagining two different preachers whose sermons are on the subject of grace. One preacher constructs his sermon along the lines of "Grace is something-or-other," and spends his time trying to say what grace is, how it operates in our lives, and what we should do to respond to it.

The second preacher makes a much different approach. To begin with, he does not mention "grace." He does talk about certain aspects of human experience in which we find ourselves the recipients of unexpected reprieves, so to speak, which are gifts of life. He speaks quite ordinarily. He talks about human feelings, about our baffleement at bring treated better by both other men and circumstances than we suspect we had coming to us. As his sermon goes along, I, the listener, translate it in terms of my own versions of the events he is talking about. What he says is "my story." "Grace" has not yet been mentioned.

Shortly the preacher is saying that our stories seem to take an odd twist. They grow more intense, more puzzling, our experience is more awesome in its influence on still other aspects of our lives. How are we to make sense of it? Has anyone else been in the same boat? Where does it lead us? Our second preacher nears the end, and begins to say in one way or another, "What we have been talking about and feeling cries out for a name. It has not been an ordinary, take-it-or-leave-it kind of thing we have been sharing together, and neither will we call it by an ordinary word. We have in our own ways shared the mystery of what Christians through the ages have called the grace of God in Jesus Christ."

To be sure, that is an artificial illustration, and no preacher would sound just like that. But see how differently the theological language is used by those two preachers. The first has almost been afraid of losing God's grace if he did not talk directly and theologically about it—the agony of the verbal realist imprisoned in his language. The second has told a story, faithful to all the personal depth and am-

biguity and intensity of the experience, and then given it all a "theme," a "title," so to speak with the language of theology. Not, you see, "Grace is this or that," but "This or that which we have touched and known is what we call 'Grace.' " His theology, like Jesus' if we believe the New Testament, is retrospective and interpretative.

To review briefly: the second preacher had both the connections and the context of his language straight. He could assume his listeners' perspective and talk in a way that connected with the experience he was trying to shape in his communication. There were no missing links in his speaking; you did not have to know the secret code already to hear him. He was not afraid to break the eggs of theological language in order for the experience for which theology is no more than shorthand to come alive.

He understood what context was about; his language had to perform on the stage set of his listeners' life stories. Each one of them was saying to himself, unconsciously or consciously, "When I was a little boy I had a Dalmation dog. . . ." and the preacher knew it. His communication shaped an experience appropriating the grace of God, because its language was interwoven with the reality of it. As for Zacchaeus who would take nothing for granted about his position in life—or in trees—for that kind of preacher a kind of salvation comes to his house—the joy of participating in the experience of new life and hope which faithful preaching always promises.

WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Chaplain (LTC) David G. Boyce

An ancient adage reflects the wisdom that a single picture is worth a thousand words. If one hundred forty-five words per minute is the average rate of speaking, in a twenty minute sermon, a person speaks about twenty-nine hundred words. In keeping with the ancient saying, three pictures should suffice.

Army chaplains are very much into and a part of this wise concept. Many chapels display colorful banners. The beauty and inspiration of chapels with stained glass windows easily come to mind. Large posters are seen in post and chapel RE facilities.

One of the many ways that Army chaplains are utilizing this ancient wisdom in a contemporary and creative manner is through the use of 2" x 2" color slides taken with their Kodax Instamatic or 35mm camera. When the pictures have been snapped and developed, they are arranged in the order to be shown and placed in a carousel Slide Projector. The projector is available for check-out at the installation Audio Visual Support Center.

If the program is designed as a one shot presentation, the chaplain will probably provide live commentary to accompany the pictures. The chaplain may decide to use a cassette tape player to record the commentary if the presentation will be used more than once.

An excellent example of the use of slides is a Transactional Analysis presentation put together by Ch (CPT) Thomas M. Warme, 2nd Bn, 4th Inf Div, Fort Carson, CO. Chaplain Warme went out among his troops, took pictures and made slides of his own environment. Using these pictures of officers and enlisted personnel from the unit, he translated the concepts of Transactional Analysis into a practical and interesting presentation that very effectively hooks into the Army chaplain Personal Effectiveness Training Program.

Another use that some chaplains have made of the slide presentation is the innovative worship service used in retreat programs and for special occasions. In this instance, the chaplain has taken a contemporary song or a traditional hymn or a passage of scripture and put it on a cassette player. Then, the chaplain has made up slides from his local surroundings, used slides from his photo collection, and, if needed, obtained slides from outside sources. Then the chaplain has to put them all together along with the music or scripture passage as a meaningful and creative format.

Some chaplains have taken the slide presentation one step further and added portions of a 16mm film without the sound. The combina-

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Chaplain Boyce is a member of the US Army Chaplain Board.

tion of song, slides and film results in a multi-media scenario. This has the added impact of movement from the film. The movement of the film helps to hold the attention of the audience. At the same time, the slides provide the stability and control that balances this type production.

Chaplains also show their orientation toward the visual by their use of films. They are not the only ones who employ chaplain films but they are by far the biggest users.

In the Army Film Library there are four thousand titles. The Army Film Library keeps a record of how many times each film is used. Out of the entire inventory, the 753 films that are used the most make up the Army Film Hit Parade. It may come as a surprise to learn that 59.4% of the entire Army Hit Parade is made of Chaplain Films. That speaks well for the way that chaplains make use of visuals.

Another bit of statistical information concerns the total number of titles in the Chaplain Film Inventory as it interfaces with the Army Hit Parade. There are 481 titles in the Chaplain Film Library and 447 of these titles are on the Army Hit Parade which means that 93% of Army Chaplain Films are on the Army Hit Parade.

As to the type of films chaplains find helpful, the number one film on the Hit Parade of Chaplain Films is TF 16–4026, "The World's Champion Hater." This is a race relations title. The number two film on the Hit Parade of Chaplain Films is TF 16–4041, "Shadow of a Gunfight." This is a film about responsibility. The number three film on the Hit Parade of Chaplain Films is TF 16–4005, "Heritage and the Soldier." This film is set in various Army posts across the country and summarizes the important themes which underlie the American heritage. A recent film that seems destined to make the Hit Parade is TF 16–4810, "Together Forever." This is a film about group marriage counseling being conducted by an Army chaplain and it won the Silver Screen Award at the 1975 Chicago Film Festival.

In light of the upcoming National Bicentennial Year, civilian pastors, priests, rabbis, and educators are finding new interest in the role of the Army chaplain. To tell the story of the work of the Army chaplain, the following films are available from any Army Audio Visual Support Center to civilian religious leaders and educators: MF 16–5129, "The Bridge" (History of the Army Chaplaincy); MF 16–9810, "Challenge of the Army Chaplaincy." TF 16–3943, "The Chaplain in Combat;" TF 16–4062, "The Confinement Facility Chaplain;" TF 16–5128, "Of Soldiers and Altars;" MF 16–5307, "Reverend Turner's Night Out;" MF 16–5346, "Something More;" and MF 16–5219, "We Call Them Chaplain." All of the above films have been

cleared for public viewing and give a comprehensive overview of the work of the Army Chaplain.

About the use of films in the context of worship services, the ways to use them are many. One way is to use five minutes of a film as the introduction to a homily or sermon. Another way is to use ten minutes of a film as a prelude to worship in much the same way that organ music is used as a prelude. Perhaps one of the favorite ways is to show an entire film at a special worship service and then have a discussion period afterwards.

Chaplains are veteran film users and they are now getting into television by way of the CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) facilities on many Army installations. At the present time the greatest use seems to be in hospitals that have CCTV and at Training Center installations where the CCTV systems are more fully operational. However, the plan is to make all Army installations CCTV operational.

The hospital chaplain has the opportunity to produce video tapes for use on the hospital CCTV system. This might be in the form of a worship service or in the short devotional format.

On the installation level, the post chaplain may provide video material such as "Spring Street USA" to the CCTV station or the post chaplain may choose to produce video material that concerns members of that particular installation in much the same way that the Office of the Chaplain, US Army, Hawaii, produced a video tape of their Catholic Hawaiian Folk Mass, conducted on Saturday evenings at Fort Derussy Beach, Waikiki, Hawaii.

It is the wisdom of Army chaplains to make extensive use of visuals. They will use them provided they fit the need. Otherwise, they will usually go ahead and create their own.

One day, the first Army chaplain will go to the moon and will accompany those who push ahead in space colonization and intergalactic space exploration.

By that time holographic research will have provided three dimensional holograms much like the model on exhibition at the Redstone Arsenal Space Center. But the wisdom will not have changed. One hologram will still be worth a thousand words.

JONATHAN LIVINGSTONE SEAGULL: THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY MEDIA AS PASTORAL TOOLS

Chaplain (CPT) Vaughn R. Neshiem

Since my ordination in 1967, I have been involved with a variety of people, some who were bruised beyond belief and, often, beyond my reach. Though the means of grace at my disposal were efficacious, they were recognized only by those individuals who were in the mainstream of the religious community. As such, we had common theological "stones" in the stream, enabling us to walk toward each other, that permitted me to minister to their needs.

I have come to see, however, that another approach is needed for those persons who remain on the banks of the stream, having little or no religious background. The challenge has become one of developing a pastoral ministry which not only would appeal to religious persons but to secular man as well. I wanted a ministry which would be inclusive and, at the same time, incisive. I have attempted, therefore, to develop an approach that can be used with persons whether they profess religious beliefs or not—one that considers all persons to be approachable, unique, valuable, and in need of grace and love.

Paul Tillich describes pastoral care as a "helping encounter in the dimension of ultimate concern." His concept of pastoral care strongly influences my approach. The traditional model of pastoral care and concern, though seeking to build a secure relationship between pastor and patient, often functions to maintain distance between the two. This happens primarily to those pastors who see their mission in the hospital setting as one of doing something for a patient: giving a smile or a handshake, or offering a prayer, or leaving a religious tract which purportedly speaks of God's love and concern for the sick, and the dying; but somehow it escapes some pastors to *speak* love, or *feel* love, or *be* loving within a relationship of trust.

I am not excluding myself, because I, too, have held similar pastoral postures. Here, however, I am describing what I experienced when I encountered patients in a totally different modality, one which I have called "liberation." This model pictures the pastor in a dialogical process with the patient which is facilitated by sharing and risking on a personal basis. I used the book, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* (but a current "pop" tune or movie would have done just as well), to provide common ground upon which "helping encounters" could take place. The liberation model demands involvement, that

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the pastor make an investment in the dialogue, that he be willing to risk rejection, anger, and, yes, intimacy with a fellow traveler. Contemporary media can be exciting and challenging when used as pastoral tools of care and concern.

Regarding the issue of pastoral identity, I am often reluctant to speak words that tell listeners that I am a "religious" man. For example, consider the minister who boards a flight and takes his seat, only to be bombarded by his traveling companion with all of those religious mysteries and questions for which there are no answers. In the ambiguity that these two persons experience, they may find that their religiosity keeps them from ever hearing one another. The pastor is so engaged in "keeping the faith," and the passenger in working through some unresolved guilt or anger related to religion, that they arrive at their destination not having communicated, not having touched each other. In maintaining my pastoral identity, I have discovered that I *can* be who I am, as long as I accept the firm fact that I am not God or a magician, but a human being.

To use the media as pastoral tools, however, it is imperative that one discover the theological content in much of contemporary literature, music and films. I contend that Americans today are constantly influenced with theological questions and insights broadcast by the radio, television, newspapers, music and movies. As chaplains, therefore, we need to take seriously what is being spoken, seen, and read by persons everywhere. It is insufficient and misleading to label the media as trash, sick, or pagan; nor is the assumption valid that people will learn, believe, and be influenced by only what the church teaches them about life. Such assumptions overlook helpful tools when they ignore "pop" theology and the impact it has made on our society, including those who profess no particular religious belief.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF CONTEMPORARY "POP" THEOLOGY

Contemporary "pop" theology is not something static or rigid that can be bound in books, or captured on film, discs, and tape. It can be observed, however, by almost anyone who is interested. "Pop" theology reflects the thoughts of the existential philosophers and theologians who have influenced modern man. Camus, Sartre, and Chardin are but a few. I would also recommend honorary doctorates in theology for Bobby Dylan, Neil Diamond, and Jonathan Livingston Seagull who helped us to see differently.

> "Once you learn, you can see every single thing in the world in a different way."

"Then, Don Juan, you don't see the world in the usual way any more."

"I see both ways. When I want to look at the world, I see it the way you do. Then when I want to see it, I look at it the way I know, and I perceive it in a different way."

But. . .what's the advantage of learning to *see*?"

"You can tell things apart. You can see them for what they really are." [1]

By looking and listening I learned to see. I began to understand what it was that prompted Bob Dylan's popularity in the 1960s, what it was that drew the youth of America into the Jesus Movement, and what it was that captivated listeners when Joan Baez sang.

I have chosen three persons as representatives of "pop" theology, none of whom claim any specific religiosity but all of whom communicate a theology as surely as did Melancthon or Luther or Wesley.

Dylan's theology, in fact, gave me the courage to use *JLS* [2] in a religious setting. One issue of *Dialog* magazine was devoted entirely to the theological influence that Dylan has had upon America. The growth of "protest" songs and marches, the linked arms and hands, the feet that marched down the streets in Birmingham, Alabama, for a cause which shook the nation, and the activism of the 1960s was fed and encouraged by contemporary "pop" theology.

Another artist, Neil Diamond, has written many songs which convey theological messages. A classic example is his song, "I AM, I SAID. . ." conveys the poignant cry of contemporary man in search of his own identity in an echo chamber called the world in which he lives. The affirming word that is spoken is always ended as a plan to *BE*. It is precisely here that the Christian Gospel has something to offer to the futility and the hopelessness which man feels today. The whole cinema of Watergate and subsequent assorted serials seem to characterize modern man as adrift on a sea of loneliness and despair. The phoniness of life (à là Salinger) comes back again and again to haunt him and his cry is indeed "I AM. . .I SAID."

Finally, we come to a book written by Richard Bach, a pilot, who penned *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. Seven million people either have bought the book or seen the movie. In *Theology Today* a reviewer described *JLS* in this way:

"But *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* is another matter, for the movie makes even clearer than the book what a strange amalgam is Jonathan Livingston Seagull of Ayn Rand Objectivism and Christian *Koinonia*. Jonathan is the classic individualist who, after banishment, death, and resurrection, and increased knowledge of life, returns to the flock, shares his commitment with others, and refuses to let official censure keep him from

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[1] Carlos Castaneda, *A Separate Reality* (New York: Simon and Shuster, Inc., 1971).

[2] *JLS* is used in two ways in the article: as the title of Richard Bach's book, *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull* (New York: Macmillan, 1972); and as the name of the main character of the book, Jonathan Livingstone Seagull.

the fellowship of community. The film reasonably communicates Jonathan not so much as a Christ figure, but as an image of heroic possibilities within a context of realism, but yet a heightened perception of reality.[3]

In my research of *JLS*, I was hard-pressed to find a single enthusiastic review. That fact, coupled with *JLS*'s apparent success, indicated to me that the public does not heed the expertise of literary or film critics as much as their own need to be entertained or enlightened. *Newsweek* reported:

> The bird's unprecedented popularity. . .indicates how desperate people must be these days for something hopeful to believe in. . . . Jonathan has become a national symbol of steadfast integrity and of selfless devotion, not to a leader, but to an idea of excellence. These days that makes him a very rare bird indeed. Perhaps it is not so strange then that this seagull has alighted and is now nesting comfortably in America's inspiration gap.[4]

In response to the critics, I simply say that seven million people have found something in that white, fleet-of-wing bird called JLS. Why? Isn't it because people today have the need to reach beyond themselves, paradoxically, to find themselves? I am convinced that America is suffering an emotional depression. If *JLS* somehow answers that need, and enables one to break out of emotional poverty, I wholeheartedly support the story. The story, while offering the hope that freedom and liberation are possible, also focuses on personal response to liberation—JLS eventually returned to his own society.

I feel that Jesus had much the same thing to say to us when he told the crowds in the marketplace of his day, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Again, I make the point that we need to listen. If we are not cognizant of contemporary "pop" theology and what it conveys, we are not hearing what parishioners are hearing, and, more than likely, we are not hearing our parishioners as well. Should that be the case, our listeners are not hearing us, either. I want to be more aware of the contemporary and how it influences the people I serve. As I become more aware of these influences, I can also become more pro-active and prophetic. I find that most persons are willing to share their views and opinions about *JLS*, and if they find acceptance on that level, they then are willing to share their needs and concerns. That is where the "helping encounter" that Tillich spoke of enters, and pastoral care begins with pastor and people mutually risking and sharing themselves. Because we have taken the first step together, we can be certain that we will attempt the second step as well. We have found a

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[3] Volume XXXI, No. 1, April, 1974. pp. 48–49.
[4] July 9, 1973. p. 29.

few common stones in the media and we step on them, drawing nearer to each other.

REASONS FOR USING *JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL*

A common motif running throughout "pop" theology is the response of love. This theological stone is easily observed in *JLS*. For JLS, love means returning to the flock. Love for most of us is found in relationships. Scripture says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." That's where it's at! That crazy, mixed-up bird isn't content to leave well enough alone. But having found out all he could about flying and being, he returns to the same flock that rejected him, the same flock that called him "outcast." It is here that JLS begins his love—by sharing that knowledge that he has accumulated, that experience that he has mastered, and he offers it to the flock.

It seems to me that if we were to totally divorce ourselves from humanity, if we were to remain in some "netherland," having found something precious and having value for us, it would be contrary to the Spirit of the Gospel which bids us, no, compels us to share His love with others. JLS responds in love to his fellows by sharing with them what he had experienced. I have come to believe that I can do no less; even though it's scary, I must! Because I choose to share that, you, too, can "fly," you, too, can "be," you, too, can live! You can "be" as Neil Diamond puts it "BE, as a page that aches for a word which speaks on a theme that is timeless, while the sungod will make for you day. . . . SING, as a song in search of a voice that is silent, and the one God will make for your way. . . . YOU CAN BE. . . ."

I encountered the seagull first in Hal Bartlett's motion picture, "Jonathan Livingston Seagull." It was, I suspect, a combination of the fantastic photography as well as the musical score by Neil Diamond that led me to read the book after I saw the film. I found the book to be as exciting as the film, and wanted to share the insights I had gained from both.

When I first engaged patients in discussions about *JLS*, most responded "Yes, I too have read the book," or "I have seen the movie." A few indicated a real interest and desired to obtain a copy of the book for themselves. It was in response to that desire that the project was born.

The first objective for utilizing *JLS* in a clinical [5] setting was: *to share with others something in which I had found value and derived a message.* The initial feeling I experienced in doing this was one of

[5] Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

fear that the patient would not only reject the opportunity to dialogue and share, but that the patient would ultimately reject me as well as *JLS*. I reasoned, however, that if it is true people feel greater freedom to express their religious feelings in parabolical language, then certainly *JLS* would allow them to do so. *JLS* can properly be seen as a fantasy or a parable—a story about a bird, a story of conflict and struggle. As such it allows people to participate in it, to take from the story what is applicable and meaningful to them as individuals.

My original plan called for small group discussions, using the film itself to convey the message, but logistics and expense led me to another plan. I eventually developed a questionnaire that would uncover the feelings one has when he or she would read the book. My rationale was simply this: if a patient would become involved enough not only to listen to the book on tape, but to complete the questionnaire as well, I could be sure of his willingness at that point to dialogue with me about *JLS*. The questions are multiple choice; there are no "correct" answers. Each patient was instructed in that respect. The questionnaire, moreover, was not a test of how well he or she had listened, but rather an opportunity to focus on feelings and questions that *JLS* had raised. I also asked for basic data as well, i.e., age, sex, reason for being in the hospital, religion, education, and branch of service.

My second objective was: *to determine how patients would receive JLS as a pastoral tool. JLS* falls somewhat outside the literature the pastor normally uses. How, therefore, would it be received in a hospital setting? How would I, moreover, as facilitator, be perceived and received? I have already alluded to my initial fear of rejection. My second fear was that I would inadvertently substitute *JLS* for the Gospel, or would allow the project to become an end in itself. I simply wanted to see how this would operate.

THE PROCESS

I managed to gather information about the patients. Nineteen participated in the project. Their average age was 31 (the age span was from 19 to 51). There were 10 females and 9 males. Their religious affiliation was: 6 Protestant, 1 Methodist, 4 Baptist, 5 Roman Catholic, 1 Nazarene, 1 Presbyterian, and 1 who had no preference.

The participants initially were selected as to wards, i.e., alternating between a male ward and a female ward, respectively. As you can see, I achieved a balance in that respect. The age of the participants did not seem to affect their willingness to participate, as I initially thought it would.

I used the book, dramatically narrated by Richard Harris on tape. Listening to the book took 40 minutes; then the participants took as much time as they wanted to complete the questionnaire. I then asked them for a minimum of ten minutes to dialogue with me regarding the project and to share our feelings about *JLS*.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull
Questionnaire

Name:
Age:
Sex:
Reason for Being Here:
Religious Preference:
Educational Background:
Branch of Service:
Choose the response(s) that best fits your feelings:

1. Jonathan Livingston Seagull needed to:
   a. Learn to get along with his world.
   b. Be satisfied with eating along with the "breakfast flock".
   c. Fly.
2. The story is really an illustration of:
   a. A non-conformist in a conforming society.
   b. Man's restlessness to be free.
   c. A Christ-figure named Jonathan.
3. Jonathan's courage to try is:
   a. Indicative of what most men want, but never have.
   b. Beyond the reach of most of us.
   c. Something I need to have.
4. The limits of birds (seagulls, men, etc.):
   a. Are barriers to be respected.
   b. Are limited to one's own dreams (hopes).
5. The risk of trying for Jonathan:
   a. Meant possible failure and death.
   b. Is not appropriate for most men.
   c. Is necessary if we are to be free.
6. Which statement best describes Jonathan's philosophy?
   a. We can be free.
   b. We try to be free.
   c. We are able to be free.
7. One of the more important questions this novel deals with is:
   a. The aerodynamics of flight.
   b. The purpose of life itself.
   c. The revolt of a seagull.
8. Boredom, fear, and anger are:

a. The reason for life being so short.
b. My feelings in this place.
c. Feelings I never express to anyone.

9. Perfection for Jonathan is:
   a. Flying faster and faster.
   b. Always beyond his reach.
   c. Heaven.
10. Heaven to Jonathan is:
   a. 10,000 feet.
   b. Being perfect.
   c. Love, compassion, and kindness now.
11. Jonathan's return to the flock involves:
   a. Love for his fellows.
   b. Courage to be in the midst of hostility.
   c. The risk of being rejected.
12. Freedom is:
   a. Flying like Jonathan.
   b. Being who you are.
   c. Getting along with this world the best you know how.
13. The struggle of Jonathan Livingston Seagull is a struggle I need to experience:
   a. True for me now.
   b. True for me at one time.
   c. Never true for me at any time.
14. The freedom of Jonathan Livingston Seagull is:
   a. A feeling I would like to have in my life.
   b. Doesn't apply to me anymore.
   c. A fantasy beyond my reach.

COMMENTS:

The logistics involved a cassette recorder, three cassettes, the questionnaire, and time for the patients to listen and reflect. I normally allowed 24 hours for them to complete the project. On two occasions, because it was over the weekend, and on another occasion when I was to be gone for an extended period, I continued the project by asking four persons to give the project to the next person. This went well, but one of my participants had emergency surgery, and the chain was broken till the following Monday. On several occasions, there were those who volunteered to participate without being prompted. I believe that the one-to-one sharing process gave them an opportunity to invest not only their time, but their thoughts and feelings as well.

The patients wrote various comments on the questionnaire in addition to answering the questions. A few of these were:

20 year old female, Methodist
"I suppose analogies of *JLS* could be made at many levels. Even at the simplest level, it is a good story. What a wonderful and great thing it would be to be a human JLS."

19 year old male, Baptist
"He is a very beautiful seagull, He understood freedom."

36 year old male, Catholic
Patient is black, and related JLS's struggle to be free to his own struggle to escape the ghetto environment he grew up in. (my comments)

20 year old female, no religious preference
"This story says much that most people feel; I believe it is a dream to them, though. Too many people simply accept things because others have accepted them. I think truth and honesty are essential in being alive. Because you aren't you with lies. I believe in Jonathan's outlook on life. You are put here to live and if no one was bold enough to break away from the system, where would we be? There would be no medicine to cure my head."

25 year old female, Nazarene
"It is my opinion that individuals are able to achieve what they desire if those desires are perfected and are from God. One must also realize that those desires can only be achieved with the strength God gives. Perhaps some individuals do not achieve as they wish because they do not know their own identity, which is also known only through life in Christ. Too, fear of failure seems to dampen the spirits of some who would otherwise be able to achieve goals they may have set."

"If individuals realized the influence that boredom, fear, and anger have on their lives, I believe they would become more intent on eliminating these things from their lives."

"The struggle for *freedom* and *perfection* should be a continuous act. However, I feel it need not be a "struggle" but rather a submission. JLS submitted himself to his spirit and desires rather than to his peers and family. Individuals must submit themselves to God and allow their desires to be molded and guided by him."

38 year old female, Roman Catholic
"JLS was born with something which people are also born with, but, I believe, are afraid to use. Personally it took a crisis in my life to show me, we are free and belong to ourselves and can do anything we want or to overcome anything that happens to us as long as we in our own mind believe it. Miracle of. . .but besides mind power it also takes love of one's self and love of your fellow man, for if you don't think enough of yourself you will never think much of others and just follow the path you think was chosen for you instead of making your own path. Each of us have to get up everytime we fall and go on for, if we don't, we don't experience life."

Approximately one-half of the participants commented beyond the stated multiple choice questions given. The remaining half chose instead to engage in dialogue with me concerning *JLS*. After the first few sessions, I decided to try another tool—an additional set of five questions:

1. Jonathan is. . . . . .?
2. If I could fly, I would fly. . . . . .?

3. When I am free, I am free to. . . . . .?
4. My life is/is not like Jonathan's because. . . . . .?
5. After experiencing *JLS*, I feel. . . . . .?

I found the patients hesitant to answer these questions orally. I suspect it was easier for them to answer written, multiple choice questions than to speak extemporaneously.

I felt a good deal of anxiety and apprehension initially as I explained *JLS* to each patient. I believe I felt this in part because of my personal investment in and attraction to JLS. I truly wanted the project to succeed. In addition, I believe my apprehension was based on the fact that I did not know how the patients would react to me—a chaplain—enthusiastically talking about a fictional seagull. I supposed them to be wondering what I had "up my sleeve." My initial fears and anxieties, however, were replaced with feelings of excitement and warmth, when patients who were "bored" with the hospital routine, and patients who were awaiting surgery or diagnostic tests, responded favorably to *JLS*. In particular, I remember one woman who felt that Jonathan had been "sent" to her when she needed him. The patient's receptiveness greatly encouraged me.

Only four patients refused to participate. My contract with them gave them the freedom to say "no". I must confess I felt somewhat rejected after the first "no", but I soon realized that if the project was to be meaningful and true to the spirit of "liberation," I must allow *JLS* to be turned down.

When I included the sound track from the movie version of *JLS*, I intended it to be a means of celebration and joy for those who cared to listen to and "fly" with JLS. The patients would comment. . . "It's just like flying". . . and I suspect that for most of us humans who have never left the "breakfast flock" and the security it affords, flying with JLS is akin to being on the flight path of our own adventures and dreams and hopes.

DEAR FATHER WE DREAM
WE DREAM WE DREAM
WHILE WE MAY
WHO ARE WE TO NEED
WE NEED
WE NEED
WHILE WE WAIT
WHILE WE WAIT [6]

[6] From the film, *JLS*, as sung by Neil Diamond.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The *Liberation model is a viable option* to melt the "frozenness" of man. If *JLS* has concreteness and specificity, it is its challenge to liberate human beings from the self-made refrigerators and ice-cube trays that they place themselves in. In *JLS* we have an illustration of what the warmth of the Gospel can and does do as men come to know their own power—a power that God has given them—to "fly" and to "be". In modern America with its greatnesses and weaknesses, there arises from the smog and the pollution and the turmoil, the "impossible" dream. It is to that impossibility that the words of Jesus speak with crystal clarity. "GO, YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN": and it is to that end that *JLS* speaks a word of encouragement to fly despite the odds. I believe that Jesus would have used *JLS* as a parable in his own way, in a way which encourages persons to accept themselves because they are already accepted by God. God sent his Son that we might experience freedom, that we might have life, and that we might be totally and completely his. Freedom and Being are not only concepts, but an ever-present reality which Jesus offers us. In the Christian Gospel, reality is the ability to be. . .to "fly," as it were.

2. *As pastoral tools contemporary media can serve as bridges to involvement and intimacy.* Tillich's "helping encounter" occurs when I as a pastor am open enough to risk and share what meaning there is in my life and when I am brave enough to be rejected, to be vulnerable.

There are, of course, mediums other than a book. One recalls "Billy Budd," "Oxbow Incident," "Lilies of the Field," and "On the Beach" as motion pictures which convey significant theological themes. Records, magazines, and even current news items can be used as I have used *JLS*.

3. *Pastoral identity need not be threatened by using tools not specifically religious in nature.* It was refreshing to see that I could use *JLS* as a pastoral tool, even like Jesus used clay and spittle when he bade the blind man to go and wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam. I believe we need to be aware of the richness that God provides through the skills and talents of all persons and, more importantly, to use that richness to his glory. It may certainly include prayer, the Sacrament, and scripture reading, but first, we need to get the people's attention and interest through the common ground of contemporary media.

4. *Contemporary "pop" theology is filling a need not being met by the church today.* I am aware that my experience with media is limited, but I propose that the popularity of the film "The Exorcist," is an indicator. In that film I see human beings searching and reaching

for an answer that is over and above themselves. The film posits that there is a Power, a Being who can right wrong—individual and social. Private and public apathy and distrust of institutions—church, government, economic—is a barometer which measures public confidence. Unfortunately, the credibility and confidence level is low today.

In addition, society mirrors the individual's frustrations, obsessions, hopes and dreams. A Christian response to modern human needs, therefore, is not only imperative, but vital. The needs of society are being echoed in the songs our youth hear, play and sing. But the image of man portrayed in these songs is often incongruous. Yet it is to that incongruity and that diffuseness that the grace of God comes with congruity and clarity, affirming men and women, meeting their needs, with love and acceptance and affirmation in the marketplace of life. One result is *cosmos* in the midst of *chaos*.

5. *Jonathan Livingston Seagull is a book of many motifs.* One can derive from it any number of "isms" as some critics have done. But I see *JLS* as more than a book about a bird, or even a story about unselfish love which JLS displays in his return to society. I believe that *JLS* is a parable which portrays the Christian response to the challenges of life, but a parable which speaks the loudest to the Christ in everyone. To warm up to life, to move from dead-center, to lift off from the ground of being and to venture forth in response to God's message—we let ourselves BE. . . . FLY!

6. *A number of people can be reached through this method.* I believe my experience has indicated as much. However, and here is the inherent danger, there is the risk that the method may become an end in itself, that it may serve not as an entree, but as a wall to keep the pastor away from the patient. In its most extreme form, this occurs when the pastor's prime consideration becomes, not the patient, but the method. Those of us who use this or any other technique should never allow it to replace human warmth, openness, and love in our relationships with others.

GAMES AND VALUES CLARIFICATION: AIDS IN HUMAN SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Chaplain (MAJ) Hugh J. Bickley
Chaplain (CPT) Ford F. G'Segner

Throughout the last three decades the chaplaincy has given serious attention to human self-development. Though given different names—Character Guidance, Our Moral Heritage, and the Human Self-Development Program—the intent has been to involve soldiers in a process of moral and ethical self-development. In general, these programs which have identified and taught American values have followed standard classroom methods of instruction. Lectures, small and large group discussions, panel discussions, supported with audio-visuals characterized the format of the majority of these programs.

More recently, however, words like "values," "goal clarification," "group dynamics," "human interaction," "communication process," "experiential learning," and "simulation games" have been heard and used in connection with human self-development programs. It has become increasingly evident that people today, to include the modern soldier and his family, are searching for meaning, purpose and direction in their lives as they are influenced by an assortment of institutions which involve them daily. In short, there is a thrust today toward personal growth and development.

Chaplains everywhere are coming to see that human self-development, to be most effective, must capitalize on the dynamics of interaction between persons as the determining factor in shaping the character of the individual. It is, indeed, in interaction with other persons that the self is formed, deformed, reformed, or transformed.

The didactic process where the teacher imparts information to his pupils like a waiter filling glasses from a wine bottle, can be effective. However, the best way for adults to learn is where the teacher acts as a resource person; where the process is inductive, not deductive; and where the emphasis is upon participation and independent inquiry by the individual with the group. Self-expression is stimulated by painting, music, drama, and the use of electronic media. Values, ideas and ideals are examined and evaluated in small groups while the participants are helped to "feel" relationships and to "find" themselves by acting out various roles within simulated situations.

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Educational journals, management magazines, adult education reports, continuing education briefs, sociological and psychological articles, and religious writings and books tell us that contemporary persons share the following characteristics. They (we) are *nonauthoritarian, dialogical, interdependent,* and *participative.* These traits suggest that those of us who work with people today in learning endeavors should be flexible, evoking, and participatory because we are facing a different kind of person in the audience, the classroom, and in the group.

At Redstone Arsenal, while not completely discarding the lecture-conference method of instruction, we have initiated more innovative approaches to human self-development. In the attempt to help people to discover themselves and to make positive changes in their lifestyles, *we are playing* games. Not games that just kill time or fill the hour, but games in which people communicate and interact, examining their attitudes and values. These games fall into two broad categories: value clarification exercises and simulation games.

This article, therefore, is an attempt to describe how values clarification exercises and simulation games are tools in human self-development. We will show how these tools allow and encourage persons to develop self-worth and to discover their values. Secondly, we will try to relate how we do this at Redstone Arsenal.

VALUES AND VALUES CLARIFICATION

Brian P. Hall maintains that a value is something that is freely chosen from alternatives and is acted upon, that which the individual celebrates as being part of his creative integration in development as a person.[1] His essential point is that a value is freely chosen from a list of alternatives and is acted upon and lived out in daily life. The person *enjoys* and *participates* in his selected values.

Everyday we make decisions, offer opinions, and take actions which not only influence us and those around us, but which reveal our values. All that we do is the result of our attitudes, beliefs, and value systems. Our values may be products of our deliberate decisions or we may have acquired them from our social environment. Nevertheless, we can safely say that we are what we have been becoming; we cannot actually separate our actions from our attitudes, beliefs, and values.

A recent *Our Moral Heritage* pamphlet touches our subject:

> Every human being is born with innate rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; every person has an

[1] *Value Clarification as Learning Process: A Guidebook* (New York: Paulist Press, 1973) p. 11.

> inherent idignity which must be protected by the full forces of law in a democratic society; every man is endowed with freedom of choice; man has the capability to discern the differences between right and wrong. The ability to discern between right and wrong makes man a responsible being.[2]

This statement strongly recommends that we, as American citizens, know what we believe. We cannot handle our lives if we are unaware of what is valuable or desirable to us. We must have clear notions of what we prize and what we hold essential.

All persons—young and old—face some confusion about the important things in their lives. They are surrounded by a glittering array of choices, like a child at a candy counter. Youth feel this confusion intensely and reflect it readily. Older people also tend to be confused; though their confusion is less noticeable, it is not less acute.

In almost every area of human endeavor and involvement one observes values and value conflicts operating:

politics	family	money	rules
school	leisure time	aging death	authority
religion	material possesions	health	freedom
love, sex	clothes, hair- styles	race	military routine
work	friends	war, peace	poverty

Within the milieu of modern living conflicts arise, problems emerge, and values clash. Chaplains—as pastors, teachers, and leaders—are aware of these conflicts. By their calling and mission they support and stimulate ways of living that are morally and spiritually productive. Chaplains know that it is not enough to untangle the knotted values some persons present to them; it is insufficient to cut out the knots from people's snagged lives. Chaplains, therefore should provide opportunities for people to look at their own backlashed behavior with the hope that they will be able to unravel and rewind their personal and social affairs.

There are four ways that chaplains can provide guidance in values training: [3]

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[2] DA Pamphlet 165–5, *Our Moral Heritage* (Washington, D.C., Headquarters, Department of the Army, January 1974) p. 11.

[3] Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum, *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students* (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1972) p. 15.

1. MORALIZING: This direct approach assumes that the chaplain's experiences and resulting values system is right for those whom he teaches. There are, however, problems here. When a chaplain moralizes he imposes his values on others and, in so doing, he asks them to reject their operative values on the basis of blind submission to authority, or the power of propaganda, or peer pressure without allowing them an opportunity to measure and sort out their own beliefs. Another problem with moralizing rests in the imbalance between theory and practice, namely, the moralizer says one thing, but does something else. In addition, moralizing usually influences only one's vocabulary and little else.

2. A *LAISSEZ-FAIRE* ATTITUDE: This approach says, "Think and do and be the way you want, and in the long run, everything will turn out okay." While recognizing the fact that there is no one value system that is right for everyone, the *laissez-faire* attitude overlooks values that are held by those persons the chaplain seeks to instruct. In daily life, moreover, everything does not "turn out okay," regardless of the values one cherishes.

3. MODELING: It is helpful to have models to follow, but that can be a problem, also. Politicans, movie stars, peers, pastors, parents, COs and NCOs model different value systems. The multiplicity of models make it difficult, if not impossible, for one to know which is right for him or her. Are any? Which? Why? Why not?

4. VALUES CLARIFICATION: This is a process which allows persons to build and to discover their own values systems. It is a method by which a person is helped to discover his values, the motors which power his behavior. For example, values clarification tells a person when he is living on a set of values acquired in childhood and that, consequently, is why he is moving in conflicting directions. He has hidden goals. To use values clarification exercises, however, it is essential to recognize that *process* is far more important than content.

The values clarification approach is neither sensitivity training nor psychotherapy, but rather a learning experience in which people explore their lives and discover meaning for themselves. It is a process which enables men and women to locate their limitations and illuminate their values as they seek to find truth and make sense out of the world in which they live.

The goal, therefore, of values clarification is to help soldiers, chapel participants, and fellow chaplains to use the processes of valuing in their own lives and to apply this to both established and emerging beliefs and behavior patterns.

Louis Raths describes the valuing process by making the definition of value very practical. He does this by helping the person to under-

stand whether or not his choice is a value.[4]

CHOOSING:

1. To choose freely.
2. To choose from alternatives.
3. To choose from alternatives after considering the consequences of each alternative.

PRIZING:

4. Cherishing and being happy with the choice.
5. Willing to affirm the choice publicly.

ACTING:

6. Actually doing something with the choice.
7. Acting repeatedly in some pattern of life.

Values clarification exercises, whatever their form, are essentially connected to this process of valuing: *choosing*, *prizing*, and *acting*.

One strategy that we use at Redstone Arsenal is called "Life Line." During one of our Human Self-Development Program classes, we arrange the participants in small groups. Each person is given a sheet of paper and is asked to draw a line across the top of the page. At the left end of the line, each is asked to place his or her year of birth; at the right end of the line he places his estimated year of death. Then each person writes the current year on his "life line" so that it falls between the years of his birth and death (A person's age and attitude toward life expectancy determine where he places the current year on his "life line"). Example:

1945	1975	2020
(birth)	(now)	(death)

The next step is to ask the participants to list several goals they hope to reach before death. Afterwards, each person is told to imagine that he or she has only a few months to live ("What if you had only two months to live?"). Which goals would each keep and strive to attain? Which goals would each drop? Why? This simple exercise helps people to consider their goals in terms of their life expectancy.

By using this strategy we have observed persons becoming more aware of what they value in life, why they value it, and how they can act on their values. They, moreover, can determine if their present behavior will permit them to attain their goals, and if not, what alternative behavior is available.

[4] Louis E. Raths, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney R. Simon, *Values and Teaching* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1966).

Many values clarification exercises which address assorted areas of life and living are readily available in book and pamphlet form.[5] Many of these strategies may be used with little or no modification in human self-development endeavors.

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION THROUGH SIMULATIONS

People are not totally different from one another. There are modes of behavior recognizable in all people, and that behavior can be influenced and even modified. Simulation gaming is another tool for working toward behavioral changes.

A simulation game is the most elaborate of the teaching techniques that are referred to as modes of "autotelic inquiry." This simply means that the students interest and direction are from himself. Five methods or modes of autotelic inquiry exist:

1. Learning Game—This is a simple exercise which leads the person playing to gain some knowledge about himself and his interaction with others. An example would be "mirroring" one's behavior.

2. Role Playing—The persons involved assume roles and then act these roles out for the purpose of gaining some knowledge about themselves and about the interactions between people. An example would be the materials known as "Can of Squirms" from Contemporary Drama Service.

3. Instructional Game—A game format is used to facilitate the process of practice and re-practice. The best example of this is the "spelling bee."

4. Social Simulation—The participants take roles within the context of an actual representation of a portion of society. If you have ever been in a mock trial or in a mock election, then you have participated in a social simulation.

5. Simulation Game—The people involved assume roles within the context of a complex social model. The social process is actually portrayed for the encounter that is desired by putting into game form the elements that the designer holds as necessary for his purpose. Examples are numerous. Perhaps the best known is *Starpower*.

Whereas values clarification is oriented toward individuals, (personal examination, appraisal and change), simulation gaming provides models of systems. Individual values and relationships can be observed within the framework of a larger system. Simulation games provide participants an experiential method of learning by doing while preserving the individual's integrity and uniqueness.

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[5] A brief list of resources for values clarification and simulation gaming has been placed at the end of this article.

Current educational theory indicates that people learn best by experiencing the consequences of their actions within a given environment which leads them to cope with or modify their value systems. Simulations offer two opportunities:

1. Education: the player learns how and why others behave.
2. Theory Testing: the player can test his or her theories (beliefs, attitudes, values) by "trying on" (modeling) his behavior within structured settings.

During the Human Self-Development portion of the NCO Education System at Redstone Arsenal, we present a group exercise which, while not being a pure simulation game, calls upon the players' imaginations. Each NCO is asked to read a handout that capsulizes a specific Human Self-Development topic. We use the handouts that the Staff Chaplain, Army Material Command, provides. These handouts address a variety of topics: personal aspects of safety, social concern, common sense, and personal freedom. The class divides into triads; each triad selects one of the topics of study. Each person in the group contributes his or her ideas which illustrate that specific topic. During the plenary session, each group reports its illustrations (stories, incidents, personal examples) to the entire class.

On one occasion an NCO said, "I think we could illustrate personal freedom by visiting a local stockade and feel what it is like to be behind bars and restrained from doing what we want." Someone then asked, "Have any of you been in a stockade?" "No!" was the overwhelming response. We then tried to *imagine* what being in a stockade would mean to us. In this way the "luggage" called personal freedom could be unpacked as each imagined himself to be a prisoner. Although we didn't do it that time, role play may have added another dimension to our learning.

Most NCOs have been favorably impressed with this approach. One said, "It gives us a chance to see how others think and act." Another said, "There is no *Army* solution, so we don't have to be defensive about our opinions. We can say what's on our minds and be more honest with each other, and with you, Chaplain."

The Army Race Relations/Equal Opportunity Training Programs have become separate emphases. We have participated in Racial Awareness training and are currently involved in middle management training to implement the affirmative action plan at Redstone Arsenal. We have had success with *Starpower*, a simulation game which leads to the establishment of the three-tiered society through the unequal distribution of wealth. Players are given the opportunity to progress from one tier to another by trading and bargaining with each other. Once the simulated society is built, however, the group which has acquired the most wealth is given the power to make the

rules of the game. Usually these rules benefit the group in power. The rules, being unfair, fascist and racist, place stress on the other two groups. When a revolt occurs, the game ends and the players discuss their feelings and those similarities between the game and "real" life.

The most frequent comment is, "The rich get richer, but the poor get poorer." Another comment commonly heard is, "You (the facilitators of the game) made us do this, so we didn't have anything to do with determining the fairness of the treatment we gave to other groups." In reply another person usually says, "But you could have *changed* the rules in any way you wished, but you only protected yourself".

Starpower used in Racial Awareness Training helps the players to practice and demonstrate, as well as discover, effective interpersonal relationships. It also demonstrates how easy it is to stereotype other persons. A debriefing period which points to parallels in real life makes the game even more real. The results are often eye opening and insightful. The facilitator monitors the game to play down the ever present "who-did-what-to-whom" and to bring out broader personal and social applications.

The easiest and probably the best way to begin using simulation games is simply to play one of the games on the market that fits an objective of your group or class.

Values clarification exercises and simulation games are superb approaches for us to use in the various Human Self-Development Programs. Because we are called upon to teach—to do something—in the area of morals, we should be realistic in our attempts to do so. By using methods which enable people to discover their values and to accept responsibility for their actions, we are making a significant contribution to the military community.

RESOURCES FOR VALUE CLARIFICATION AND SIMULATION GAMING

Flynn, Elizabeth W., and John F. La Faso, *Designs in Affective Education*, Paulist Press, New York, 1974

A teacher (public or parochial) resource program for Junior and Senior High students. Emphasis falls on integration of the affective and cognitive domains. More than 100 designs which can be used in military setting with little or no modification. Themes: communication, freedom, happiness, life, peace, and love.

Gillispie, Philip H., *Learning Through Simulation Games*, Paulist Press, New York, 1973

A presentation of simulation gaming. Explains in detail thirty-five simulation games with practical suggestions about using each. Contains *Starpower*. Games address: freedom, peace, love, happiness, communication.

Hall, Brian P., *Value Clarification as Learning Process: A Guidebook, Value Clarification as Learning Process: A Handbook, and Value Clarification as Learning Process: A Sourcebook*, Paulist Press, New York, 1973

Jongeward, Dorothy, and Muriel Jones, *Winning with People*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading, Massachusetts, 1973

An excellent workbook designed as a group-oriented training tool for rapid learning of transactional analysis principles. Usual TA language used with unusual group exercises.

Raths, Louis E., Merrill Harmin, and Sidney R. Simon, *Values and Teaching*, Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1966

A reference book for all who work with value clarification.

Simon, Sydney R. Leland W. Howe, and Howard Kirschenbaum, *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students*, Hart Publishing Company, New York, 1972

Unique. No sermonizing or moralizing. Process, not content oriented. More than 75 practical designs to engage students and teachers in value examination and formulation. Already being used by a growing number of chaplains.

Stadsklev, Ron, *Handbook of Simulation Gaming in Social Education*, Institute of Higher Education Research and Services, The University of Alabama, Tuscalousa, 1974

Perhaps the most comprehensive book on simulation gaming. Highly readable. Comments on designing and building your own simulations.

Weiser, Conrad, *Dancing All the Dances, Singing All the Songs*, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1975

A collection of poignant experiential pieces. A do, think, reflect, act, try, read aloud, share volume. Contains poetry and prose. Exercises (modules) are provided. Addresses personal growth, self and social awareness. Theme: celebration, responsibility, discovery.

MAKING COMMUNICATION TRAINING STICK

Chaplain (CPT) Frank Richardson

WHAT ALL TRAINERS HOPE FOR

"Really making it" sums up the challenge of communication skills training. Really making it clear to most organizational leaders that they can benefit by communication skills training is tough. Really making it available to them in usable form requires a keen sense of balance and an intimate knowledge of their organizational environments. Really making it stick is what all trainers hope for, but many despair of.

Trainers will increase their ability to give communication skills training more sticking power if they will follow three basic guidelines:

Integrate skills exercises into a training plan which meets participant acquisition needs relevant to specific organizational environments;

Help participants formulate a common working conception of communication around which to organize their workshop experiences and against which to assess the effectiveness of their interpersonal behavior; and

Provide training on a support system basis to create a locus of support in the back-home situation.

AN INTEGRATED TRAINING MODEL FOR RETENTION AND TRANSFER

Recently a colleague and I proposed a model for giving training more sticking power.[1] We suggested that retention and transfer from a training setting to the back-home situation can be maximized if trainers give adequate attention to the following levels of acquisition needs of workshop participants:

Level 1: ACQUISITION OF PERSONAL AWARENESS AND THEORY BASE

Level 2: ACQUISITION OF INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

[1] Richardson, F. D. & Island, D. "A Model for Training Workshops and Labs", *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 53 (April, 1975), pp. 592–597.

Chaplain Richardson served as a representative of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, in a survey, "Asian Wives of American Servicemen: A 1975 Inquiry". He holds a Ph.D. in communication and is presently assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington.

Level 3: ACQUISITION OF SELECTED PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Assumptions of the model are that (a) each higher level is less general and more carefully defined by the needs of the participant's profession, (b) successful acquisition at each level is dependent upon successful acquisition at each more general level, (c) any professional competency should be acquired simultaneously with aspects of levels one and two directly related to it, and (d) retention and transfer are increased as integration of the levels becomes more complete.

Effectiveness in applying this model depends upon internal consistency and integration in the training plan. Each element in the training plan should contribute to the simultaneous acquisition of needs in at least two levels of the model. For example, an exercise in nonverbal awareness is included in the training plan *only* if it both increases the participant's awareness of own and others' nonverbal behavior and simultaneously provides opportunity for him or her to acquire skill in seeking or giving feedback which incorporates that increased awareness.

Retention and transfer of training effects are further increased by providing opportunity for participants to select competencies relevant to the back-home situation (Level 3) and practice them in the workshop setting. Competency, as used here, refers to any role-related behavior which the participant views as salient to satisfactory performance in the back-home situation. Counseling, interviewing, and therapy skills; group leadership techniques; crisis intervention and conflict management procedures; and family role clarification strategies are a few examples taken from various professional fields.

The perspective upon which the model is based raises serious question about training approaches which simply train persons to be better communicators. Retention and transfer are maximized when the focus of training is on communicating more skillfully in some particular organizational or group environment with its specific exigencies and constraints.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION

I have found that communication training sticks better if participants share some common conception of what communication is. I have long since ceased asking participants to define communication, either for themselves or for the group. Instead, participants are asked to seek for a working conception of communication. Rather than working from a definition of communication—defining classes and establishing limits—participants look for a distinguishing

characteristic. Definition works to exclude those forms of behavior which don't fit or are not appropriate to the class of behaviors desirable in the training setting. Isolating a distinguishing characteristic focuses attention on the qualitative criteria which help participants recognize and reinforce those forms of behavior which are desirable to both the training and the back-home settings. Energy available to participants can be devoted to reinforcing desirable behaviors rather than extinguishing undesirable response patterns—acquiring skills rather than "breaking bad habits."

There has emerged from these metacommunication exchanges a working conception of interpersonal communication which seems to find ready acceptance in most groups. The phrase *interpersonal communication* implies an interaction between two or more persons, relating to one another as persons rather than as occupants of roles, statuses, or power positions.[2] Interpersonal communication is qualitatively different from other forms of communication in that the individual dignity and "personhood" of each interactant is a key determinant in the communication process. It comes as a surprise to some organizational leaders that simply talking to or at another does not constitute interpersonal communication. In interpersonal communication meanings, feelings and perceptions are negotiated, compared, or checked against those of others. Confirmation, disconfirmation, or more information is sought and furnished which only the other person can supply.

THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS

Negotiation is a working conception of interpersonal communication which most workshop participants in my experience have easily grasped as a core concept around which to organize their workshop experiences. While they often have difficulty assessing their overall communication effectiveness they find themselves able to pick out elements in their behavior which contain that distinguishing characteristic of interpersonal communication—some form of negotiation.

Negotiation implies reciprocal attempts on the part of persons engaged in an interaction to assign similar meanings to words or behavior on which they jointly focus. An interaction characterized by negotiation might begin with a statement by one of the persons involved in interaction. The other person initiates a negotiating or trial response as if to say "I'm trying to check the meaning I'm assigning to your words and behavior to see if they meant the same to you that they mean to me." The originator of the statement might then con-

[2] Stewart, J. *Bridges Not Walls*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1973, p. 5.

firm the trial response for accuracy, or may have to modify the original statement, or give additional information to help the listener approximate the intended meaning. The process continues in this alternating pattern of creating successive approximations of meaning until meanings constructed by both persons match at a satisfactory level—they understand.

Of course, it takes much longer to describe the negotiation process than for it to occur in interaction. While successful negotiation of meaning can be a tedious and time-consuming endeavor, its yield may be measured in terms of understanding, conflict avoidance or resolution, mutual maintenance of self-esteem, systems efficiency, and other desirable outcomes. The more frequently and skillfully the negotiation process is employed, the smaller the costs in time and energy, and the greater the positive yield.

To illustrate the negotiation process, the workshop participants are asked to imagine a tennis match in which one player serves us a ball. Regardless of which player serves, both players bat the ball back and forth. Now, if the rules of the sport and the laws of physics could be altered to allow them to do so, the players would mutually take shorter and less forceful strokes until, between them, they had managed to suspend the ball directly above the net.

TRAINING TO NEGOTIATE

Most communication skills exercises lend themselves well to this conception. Checking perceptions, experimenting with alternative responses, making personal statements, paraphrasing, giving and seeking descriptive feedback, responding to feelings and other "communication skills" are distinguished from writing, interviewing, public speaking, drama, and instructing—also "communication skills"—by their application of the negotiation process.

Participants in communication training workshops are introduced to the theory of interpersonal communication as negotiation and are allowed to experience the process through skills exercises. Opportunity is then provided for them to practice some competency which they have selected for its relevance to the back-home situation. Two examples of competencies selected for practice are given below.

A couple in a marriage preparation workshop may decide to have a weekly review of their activities as they have affected the marriage relationship. They resolve, during the portion of the workshop set aside for selecting and practicing competencies, that each partner will introduce a pivotal event or activity of the week and attempt to trace out its effect on their relationship. The other partner must hear the speaker out and may not add new content until, together, they

have approximated the intended meaning. Using communication skills acquired in the workshop they employ the negotiation process. When it is satisfactorily completed, the other partner introduces another event or activity and they again employ the negotiation process in the manner just described.

An organizational leader attending a workshop in communication skills concludes that policy statements formulated by him would be communicated more effectively if he first attempted to verbalize them to a peer, associate or secretary. The rules for the interaction are set out in advance. The leader makes the policy statement. The listener hears the leader out and initiates a negotiating response. The listener does not give additional information, opinion, or comment until the negotiation process is completed and, together, they have approximated the intended meaning. The leader may have concluded that once his listener has understood the policy statements as he intends it, he will ask for criticism or opposing points of view. If the listener desires to make such observations, they will again employ the negotiation process until the observations are satisfactorily understood by both.

Thus, in keeping with the guidelines of the integrated training model described above, workshop participants are introduced to the theory of interpersonal communication as negotiation and acquire communication skills for employing it, and are assisted in selecting and practicing competencies which will transfer readily to the back-home situation. When employed back home, the competencies cause the workshop participant to recall the theory and awareness which prompted the selection of those competencies, and provide a practiced activity requiring the application of the supporting communication skills acquired during the workshop.

TRAINING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The example of the organizational leader who elects to practice, as a competency, the procedure of trying his policy statements out on another person before communicating them officially to other persons in the organization points out the third characteristic of communication training strategies designed to make training stick. Training effects are quickly extinguished when workshop participants return to non-supportive back-home environments. The ability of the organizational leader to effect his plan for giving his policy statements a hearing before they are disseminated depends upon his having someone near who understands the process of negotiation and whose skills in communication match his own. The obvious solution to that problem is to train both the leader and someone near him in the

work setting. Ideally, they would be trained at the same time in the same skills and competencies.

The idea of training persons as part of a support system is not new. Team building and "family group" training strategies in Organization Development (OD) efforts basically operate on the principle of creating a support system which will reinforce training effects following the training session. Conjoint family therapy is a well-known example of support system training from a social service field.

In the U.S. Army's Personal Effectiveness Training (PET) program, as employed in my particular organization, we began training company-level leadership by pulling out key people from the companies to be trained in some basic communication and "counseling" skills. The outcome was that during follow-up interviews, those persons trained would complain that the leaders who really needed training had somehow eluded the training program. They argued that attempting to apply the skills in which they had been trained was useless with this or that leader. To broaden the scope of the training, the unit initiated several larger training sessions in which successive levels of leadership were exposed to the skills. The outcome of those sessions was that lower-level leaders pointed the finger upward and said they couldn't possibly perform effectively because upper-level leaders were blocking them. Upper-level leaders, on the other hand, pointed the blaming finger downward.

We quickly realized that the organization had to be divided vertically for training purposes. We are presently continuing the program, training company-level leadership by platoon, ie., the platoon leader and all of his subordinate leaders. The three positive outcomes of this approach to communication training are (a) all members of the support system have a common training history, know how other members of the system are attempting to behave, and can assist them in practicing communication skills; (b) since all members have been trained in matching skills, they can provide constructive feedback for one another on the effectiveness with which the skills are being employed; and (c) if support system training has resulted in a common commitment to support one another to improve interpersonal relationships and system functioning, there will be a climate of encouragement to persist in perfecting the skills and competencies acquired in the training setting.

To illustrate how the support system training approach can be employed in other than organizational training endeavors, I will give a brief description of a social service program in which the concept has been employed with success. The U.S. Army's Home assistance Training (HAT) program trains couples who have relatively mature, growing relationships to assist couples with troubled marriage rela-

tionships. It is a minimum training approach, focusing primarily upon the strengths which the couples being trained already possess. They are trained in some very basic communication and helping skills. Their roles in the program are basically supportive and modeling, and they are not trained to be therapists or lay psychiatrists. The program is founded on peer-help principles. The couples model effective patterns of family communication for other couples—their peers. The HAT couples, in turn, have been trained within a support system comprised of three or four couples. They meet periodically to discuss their involvement with troubled couples, to provide additional opportunities for practicing skills and competencies, to give one another constructive feedback and to encourage persistence in applying the skills and competencies acquired during formal supportive system training sessions. Couples have reported that the training has had positive benefits in their own relationships and that support team experiences have provided vital reinforcement for training effects.

MODULAR COMMUNICATION TRAINING

Both of the communication training programs mentioned above employed a three-hour training module comprised of introductions to theory and some practice in basic communication skills. This three-hour module, when coupled with a fourth hour devoted to selecting and practicing competencies relevant to the back-home or work setting of the particular support system being trained, can be utilized in a variety of organizational and training settings where resources or constraints allow for only minimum- or micro-training programs. The basic module provides training in:

Paying Attention Skills [3]
- attentive posture
- eye contact
- verbal following

Invitations and Encouragements to Talk
- open questions
- repetition of key phrases

Hearing and Understanding Skills
- paraphrasing
- summarizing paraphrase
- responding to feelings
- summarizing feelings

[3] This training format incorporates materials from the following sources: consulting contributions of Dr. Island; Ivey, A.E. *Microcounseling: Innovations in Interviewing Training.* Springfield, Ill.: C.C. Thomas, 1971; Johnson, D.W. *Reaching Out.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1972.

Self-Expression Skills
- sharing behavior
- "I" statements
- feeling statements
- direct relating

Negotiating Meaning

A second module of more advanced communication skills provides theory, awareness and practice in:

Advanced Responses
- checking perceptions
- giving reactions
- interpreting
- nonverbal description
- self-disclosure
- nonverbal responding
- confronting

Group Skills
- facilitating understanding between others
- conflict interventions

Like the basic module outlined above, this more advanced module is designed to be used in conjunction with a fourth hour devoted to selecting and practicing competencies which are relevant to the back-home situation of the support system being trained.

One might rightly observe that three hours is not adequate time to acquire all the skills outlined for either of the training modules. Remember that the training session is focused primarily upon introducing participants to theory, self-awareness and some practice in the skills which comprise the module. Insufficient time and resources to train participants thoroughly in desirable skills is additional reason to capitalize upon the benefits of support system training to maximize retention and transfer of those skills which can be acquired given the time available. Where more time and resources are available, more thorough practice can be undertaken. It is also possible to practice several skills simultaneously in some small group exercises.

When used as an opening session in day-long or multi-session training clinics, these communication modules will facilitate more effective training in all professional and human-services areas.

SO WHAT?

This discussion was intended to question training approaches which simply train individuals to be better communicators. Training effects from such approaches are quickly extinguished. It was also

intended to show that communication training sticks better when trainers follow some basic guidelines. Retention and transfer of communication training effects are maximized when (a) the training plan integrates theory, self-awareness, and communication skills into some practiced professional or personal competencies which can easily be applied in the back-home setting, (b) workshop participants are provided with a working conception of interpersonal communication as negotiation which serves as a behavioral reference point against which to assess the effectiveness of their communication behavior, and (c) participants are trained in support systems in which common training history, matching skills and commitment to support provide frequent opportunity for practice, a source of constructive feedback, and common encouragement to persist.

RESISTANCES TO THE GROWTH OF COLLEGIALITY IN THE MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

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INTRODUCTION

The collegial model for ministry assumes, along with other models for ministry, that clergymen and laymen share in the practice of ministry. But the collegial model, as an ideal, espouses a number of special values concerned with the processes or transactions which define the relationships between clergymen and clergymen, between clergymen and laymen, and between laymen and laymen. Collegiality, however, when viewed as a purely descriptive term denotes a continuum which runs from low to high involvement between colleagues. At the low end of the continuum collegiality exists as simple membership in a profession, is characterized by infrequent interaction of low intensity between members, and is sustained by a variety of common symbols and shared information. At the high end of the continuum collegiality exists as functional team ministry, is characterized by frequent and intense interaction between members, and is sustained by shared goals, functional equality of positional membership, a prizing of vocational competency, accountability among members, a minimizing of competition, and a shared practice of ministry. It is collegiality at the high end of the continuum which is the subject of this paper.

An assumption of this paper is that the collegial model for ministry faces its most serious obstacles in the military. Before, therefore, anyone presumes to become an advocate of collegial ministry in the military or to undertake the development of team ministry, such a person should understand the various serious resistances to the growth of collegiality and team ministry generated by certain peculiar characteristics of the military environment. The characteristics selected are described as they influence primarily the Navy chaplaincy, but these characteristics are ubiquitous throughout all the services—albeit with certain modifications.

RANK STRUCTURE OF CHAPLAINCY

Military chaplains have military rank which ranges from lieutenant to general or admiral. Military rank reflects relative authority and

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(with some significant qualifications) experience and competency. "Junior Chaplain" and "Senior Chaplain" are phrases in common use among chaplains and accurately reflect chaplains' participation in and easy identification with military rank. The interaction among chaplains of similar rank is relatively free and unrestrained. Interaction between junior and senior chaplains is often characterized by a concern for accepted protocol and punctuated by various signs of obedience and deference by the junior chaplain. The rank structure among chaplains presents a number of resistances to the growth of the collegial model of ministry.

In the first instance, if the collegial model is to involve junior and senior chaplains, the authority and power invested in rank may be shared only by the decision of the senior. At the outset, then, the collegial model for ministry can develop in the military chaplaincy only through senior chaplains who believe that the collegial model is the prefered model and who are prepared to share their authority and power with their fellow chaplains. Such a possibility becomes highly improbable, not only because of the personal satisfaction enjoyed by most people in their use of power, but because military commands hold senior chaplains responsible for the work of junior chaplains and significant risk is involved if the senior chaplain confers professional equality upon his fellow chaplains. In short, as the senior chaplain shares his authority and power, the control he exercises is weakened, and the personal risk which he takes is increased.

Rank among chaplains also inhibits the development for collegial ministry because the symbols of rank are a constant reminder that chaplains participate in a highly competitive system of advancement. In the Navy, for example, approximately fifty per cent of the chaplains in grade of commander who are eligible each year for promotion to captain may be selected. Approximately sixty per cent of the chaplains eligible for promotion to commander will be selected. All chaplains not selected receive the stigmatic classification of "passed over." A common way, therefore, of distinguishing between the more "successful" and the less "successful" is to refer to the former as a "passed over." Promotion is based upon the accumulated performance reports submitted at least annually on all chaplains by their commanding officers. In the Navy this report is called by the suggestive title of "Officer Fitness Report." The clear message communicated to chaplains and other officers is that, if you are selected you are "fit." If you are not selected you are "unfit."

Given the structure and symbols of competition it is easy to understand how difficult it would be to develop work norms compatible with a collegial model of ministry. The notion of assisting a colleague to succeed in his ministry is in conflict with the fact that this same

colleague may be in competition for the same limited number of promotion opportunities as oneself. Parenthetically, of course, it should be noted that the military presents only an intensified example of a general cultural characteristic and it is to be doubted if the intensity of competition as experienced in the American military could exist were it not reflective of the more general norm of extreme competitiveness which is uniformly endorsed throughout American culture. The intense competition in the military raises, therefore, in a more urgent form the question of mental health which, in turn, is an explicit dependent variable in studies made of American businessmen who long for open, trusting, cooperative relationships with their associates, but with whom they exist at best in a state of armed truce or self-saving negotiation. It may be hypothesized that the collegial form of ministry is not simply the most "efficient" way of doing ministry, but it is also a much needed antidote for the poison of extreme competition which chaplains have (along with their fellow countrymen and officers) ingested and which has attacked their psyches and frustrated the more human and natural drive for relationships of trust and fraternal cooperation.

Rank structure in the military chaplaincy presents a number of problems for collegiality. Rank accentuates and sustains the idea of professional inequality. Rank presents a structure which suggests that a collegial model may only be introduced by senior chaplains who voluntarily (and at considerable risk) share their authority and power. And, finally, rank is the result and reminder of relationships grounded in competition.

TRANSIENCY

Chaplains are moved from duty to duty every two or three years. Professional relationships are begun, interrupted, and begun again with considerable frequency. The simplist work relationships are established only to change with changing personnel. The possibility of establishing work relationships based on intense interaction, shared goals, and the other characteristics of the high end of the collegial continuum is remote.

Transiency, as an environmental inhibitor to collegiality, is made more serious because chaplains who are now thrown together by the happenstance of orders do not bring to their new grouping a practical experience in collegiality or a belief that collegiality is an appropriate model for ministry in the Navy.

COMMAND DEMARCATION

Chaplains function as staff officers in a variety of commands. Their responsibilities are primarily confined to their own commands. Apart

from certain limited, informal efforts in cooperation, chaplains tend to become as provincial as their command and actively participate in the jealous defense of command prerogative. The notice of a common ministry undertaken systematically and across command lines is one which may occasionally have rhetorical support—but little else.

The separation between chaplains which results from their serving in separate commands is further aggravated by the number of very large sub-cultures in the Navy environment which extend across command lines. These larger sub-cultures center around the distinctions of air, surface, and underwater forces and around the more general distinction between Navy and the Marine Corps. Chaplains serve in all four of these major sub-cultures, derive part of their identity from these cultures, share in the competitiveness between these cultures, and participate in defending these cultures against "outsiders." The distance between chaplains that these distinctions in organizations create is symbolically represented in the Marine, "flyer greens," and typical Navy uniforms which chaplains in a single geographical area may be found wearing.

The demarcations between commands and the distinctions created by major sub-cultures within the Navy place chaplains in an environment which naturally resists the development of collegiality. It is an environment in which a common professional identity is always struggling against an identity derived from command position and allegiance.

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

There are approximately sixty denominations represented in the Naval chaplaincy. Religious pluralism is certainly not unique to the military chaplaincy, but what is unique are the dynamics which are set in motion when denominational variety exists with military rank. It is both the rank of chaplains and the rank of line officers which combine with religious pluralism to affect adversely the development of collegial ministry.

A chaplain who is a fundamentalist may work for a line commander who, if anything, is a liberal. A Protestant chaplain may be directly supervised by a Roman Catholic priest. A confessional Lutheran may work for a Christian Scientist. Quite obviously the number of such possible combinations is exceedingly great. And the resulting possibilities for conflict are beyond definition. If the senior officer or chaplain uses the authority of rank to implement his own religious values by influencing a junior chaplain's practice of ministry, then the junior chaplain will normally be faced with resolution through flight or compliance.

Religious pluralism in the military also encourages the growth of secretive conclaves of chaplains who are naturally drawn together to discuss the power or preferential treatment of the Catholics or Protestants.

GOAL DIFFUSION AND SUBSTITUTION

A final characteristic of the military chaplaincy which works against the adoption of a collegial model for ministry is the influence which the military environment has upon the individual chaplain's goal for the practice of ministry. What follows is particularly applicable to the Protestant chaplain's experience.

The chaplain rarely serves in an environment in which his primary involvement is with people of his denomination. The chaplain rarely serves in a situation in which the traditional functions of ministry (such as preaching, celebrating the Sacraments, conducting worship) are valued and responded to by large numbers of people. The work of the chaplain is largely defined by the need of the command for high morale, good order, smooth functioning, and the efficient handling of deviant behavior and personal problems. The chaplain, therefore, soon finds that he is considered primarily as a counselor and he generally responds by accepting "counselor" as his dominant instrumental role. He does not, however, divest his psyche of the values and rewards which belong to his past. The result is a growing confusion regarding goals for ministry.

When a chaplain is in the process of re-defining or adjusting his personal goals for ministry he is often ill-equipped to work with other chaplains to describe goals for a team ministry. Also, if a chaplain has naively or unreflectively permitted his role as clergyman and his function as chaplain to be defined largely by command, then he will have difficulty in assuming for himself and claiming for his profession the right and responsibility for the definition and conduct of his ministry.

Goal diffusion and substitution among chaplains which results largely from an unwitting response to command authority is a process which undercuts the very possibility of profession. If there is no self-conscious identification with a profession there is no compelling reason to develop collegiality.

It would be possible to extend the list of environmental factors which make the adaption of a collegial model for ministry in the military chaplaincy an unlikely occurance. The examination of a few of these more obvious factors has been undertaken in order to underscore the improbability of such an occurrence and to make explicit the magnitude of the resistances with which collegial ministry must con-

tend. Rank among chaplains, transiency, religious pluralism, and goal confusion generate an impressive matrix of interlocking forces which resist the growth of collegiality. This is not to suggest that team ministry cannot be developed in the military, but one should certainly be disabused by any notion which suggests that collegiality can be produced by a directive or a few crash courses in human relations training.

COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

Chaplain (LTC) Wendell T. Wright

This article is about communication in organizations. It describes how one person in an organization communicates with another person in the same organization. It is my assumption that communication is a process in which meaning, thought, feeling and understanding is transferred from one person to another person or between groups of people.

There are various programs, classes, and books that present communication as a skill or technique to be learned. That approach primarily helps a person to achieve efficiency in transferring the written or spoken word to others. This article will not deal with techniques, though that is a worthy enterprise for most of us. On the contrary, this article will deal only with the process of communication. Toward that end it is important to consider at the beginning of this article that the process of communicating meaning from one person to any number of other people, whether it is intra-organizational or inter-organizational in nature, is *the process by which one human being tries to tell someone else how he perceives reality.*

There is an entire school of psychological thought often referred to as perceptual psychology, or sometimes as phenomenological psychology, that capitalizes upon this concept of reality as perceived by an individual. Perceptual psychology espouses the view that, regardless of what is objectively true, each person perceives reality and his or her perception of reality has real consequences for the behavior of the individual. Thus it is really academic to speak of the *real* facts, the *actual* data, the *objective* truth, because whatever is *perceived* as being real becomes real for the person in question. In fact perceptual psychology says that you can understand the behavior of an individual only from that person's point of view. This psychological discipline attempts to observe people not as they seem to outsiders but as they seem to themselves. Furthermore, it suggests that people do not behave solely because of the external forces which influence them, but also because of those forces they think or perceive to be present.

When behavior is seen from this frame of reference, the problem of perception and the process of communication take on different meanings. Learning how to use media efficiently, how to write memos, how to speak distinctly, and how to prepare a speech with continuity and progression are quite important. But it is also important for us to

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learn how to understand the background from which another person speaks. It is my opinion that if one is to understand the behavior of another, he must first know how things seem to that person.

Broadly speaking, there are two ways to examine human behavior. One is from the viewpoint of an outsider; the other is from the point of view of the actor (the behaver) himself. In the first we observe the behavior of others and the situation in which such behavior occurs. It is then possible to attempt to explain a person's behavior in terms of his or her interaction within the situations in which we have seen him operating. This might be called the objective or external frame of reference. The second approach, however, seeks to understand behavior by focusing on the behaver as an individual and this is the approach we opt for in this article. This is the personal or, as stated earlier, the phenomenological frame of reference. In the personal or perceptual frame of reference we attempt to observe behavior from the viewpoint of the individual actor. This is what almost all people in the helping professions—whether professionals or lay persons—do as soon as they are confronted with a task touching upon the behavior of an individual. They ask, "What does he want?" "What is he thinking?" "What is he trying to say?"

One thing that becomes obvious as we observe the behavior of others and our own behavior as well, is that a person does not behave according to the facts as perceived by *other* people. A person behaves according to the facts as he or she sees them. What govern behavior from the individual's viewpoint are his unique perceptions of himself and of the world in which he lives, namely, the meanings that persons and objects have for him. Combs and Snygg have written a classic in which they explore the perceptual approach to behavior.[1] In their book they tell the story of a kindergarten child who tried to tell his teacher how pretty a girl looked in her brand new party dress. The child said, "She was pretty, . . . as pretty . . . as pretty as a mother." This little fellow, searching his mind for the prettiest comparison he could think of, used his own frame of reference regardless of the objective truth. The fact of the matter was that from an outside observer's point of view this child's mother could be described only as a very homely woman. To this little boy, however, his mother was the epitome of beauty and the criterion by which loveliness was to be judged. How his mother actually looked to other people was largely irrelevant information in trying to understand the child and his relationship to his mother.

Combs and Snygg posit the theory that the objective facts about behavior some of us have learned are irrelevant. From the viewpoint

[1] Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg, *Individual Behavior* (New York: Harper & Row, 1949), pp. 16–36.

of the one behaving, behavior is always caused and purposeful. It always has a reason. Sometimes the reasons may not be very clear; they may be vague and confused in which case the behavior is equally vague and uncertain. At other times the meanings are extremely clear and definite. Combs and Snygg suggest that everthing we do seems reasonable and necessary at the time we do it. When we look at people from an external and objective point of view their behavior may seem irrational because we do not experience things as they do. Even our own behavior in retrospect may seem to have been very silly, vague, or ineffective. But at the moment of behavior each person's actions to him seem to be best and most effective under the circumstances; if in that moment he had known how to behave more effectively, he would have done so.

Combs and Snygg suggest that, from the point of view of the observer who knows the location of an exit in a burning building, the behavior of a fire victim rushing back again and again to a jammed door is completely unreasonable. From the point of view of the victim in those circumstances, it is the most reasonable thing he can do because the door is the closest approximation to an exit he can find. However capricious, irrelevant and irrational one's behavior may appear to an outsider, at that moment his behavior is purposeful, relevant, and reasonable to the situation *from his point of view.* How it appears to others has no bearing on the causes of his behavior. The important thing is how it seems to the person himself. These personal meanings which govern behavior we call perceptions, and it is the fundamental thesis of this article that *all communication is perceptual communication.*

The real purpose of communication is to try to tell another person what the world looks like to you. In order to do that you may persuade, conjole, argue, plead, cry, shout, speak softly, and write. But it is invaribly an attempt to transfer a perception of reality, from the mind and experience of one human being, in a fashion that can be apprehended and internalized, by one or more other human beings. It is, therefore, important to know what "reality" is. When we speak of communicating to other people what is "real," we need to understand that we are referring to a very subjective view of reality; the real is what is perceived as being real. Truth lies not in the event but in the phenomenon, that is to say, in the individual's experience of the event. Behavior then is a function not of the external event but of the individual's perception of it.

This concept of phenomenology is sometimes referred to as a perceptual *field;* that is, the perceptual field is the universe of experience each individual lives. It is the everyday situation of the self and its surroundings which a person takes to be reality. To each of us the

perceptual field of another person may contain much error and illusion because it seems an interpretation of reality rather than reality itself. But to each individual his phenomenal field *is* reality. It is the only reality he can know. This perceptual field is far richer and more meaningful than that of the objective physical world. We do not live in a world of objects without meaning. On the contrary, we invest things about us with all sorts of meanings. For each of us, these meanings compose the realities to which we respond.

You are, undoubtedly, familiar with the parable of the six blind men who tried to describe an elephant. Each, by touching a different part of the elephant's body, pictured the beast to be like a wall, a spear, a snake, a tree trunk, a fan, or a rope. Each blind man described the elephant, computing whatever information his sense of touch gathered, from his own phenomenal field. Though we know that an elephant doesn't look like a tree trunk or a snake, it would have been almost impossible to have convinced the blind men otherwise. A fan, a rope, a spear, a wall—these meanings composed their respective realities of what an elephant looked like.

A field as it is understood in modern science always has at least four properties. They are *stability*, *fluidity*, *intensity*, and *direction*. These same four properties are also characteristic of the perceptual field, although they are expressed in somewhat different fashion. The perceptual field has a quality of stability. Perceptions do not normally change overnight. It has taken years for us to become who we are and for things to be perceived the way they are by us, and this will not change quickly nor easily. This stability protects us from chaos and lends to predictability. Without stability of one perceptual field there would be no consistency of experience or congruence of behavior from one day to the next; we would be completely disorganized, schizoid personalities.

The perceptual field about which or from which the person communicates is *fluid*. The phenomenal field is continually changing and this is sometimes difficult to study. It is this fluidity of the field which makes change of behavior possible. Without some kind of fluidity the person would be unable to adjust to the changing circumstances in which he must live and find satisfaction. The capacity for change in the perceptual field also makes learning, reasoning, remembering, forgetting, and creativity possible. The perceptual field is highly *fluid* but is by no means unorganized, it has stability.

As well as having stability and fluidity, the perceptual field has *direction* and *intensity*. Direction applies to the goals to which personal needs lead. These goals are derived from a combination of past experiences and current biological needs that help form one's self-image. Thus, the direction of perceptions is generally toward goals

that are congruent with one's self-image. By the same token, the intensity of the drive toward any particular goal in one's perceptual field is determined in part by the perceived importance of that goal toward the enhancement of the self-image.

The perceptual field was first studied by the Gestalt psychologists who objected to the orthodox stimulus-response psychology of their day and who pointed out that surely human understanding is much more than an addition of unrelated stimuli. When we look at a picture we see much more than spots of paint and our response to a piece of music is much more than hearing a series of distinct and differentiated notes. Therefore, the Gestalt psychologists pointed out that perception is always organized into what they called a Gestalt, or a configuration. And what is perceived, they said, is always a total event and never an isolated event; people see objects as wholes.

How one sees any specific incident or thing, that is, how his perceptual field is organized at any given time, is always in terms of reference to his *need* and the *activity* by which he is trying to satisify his need at the time. To apply this idea, you can say that if we knew what a person's need was at any given time, and the activity by which he was trying to satisfy that need, then his behavior would make sense to us in terms of his perceptual field. When he describes something to us, when he, if he will, communicates with us, it is always in terms of how he perceives reality at that given moment.

This leads us to say that *common perceptions make communication possible.* If two people see the same incident but perceive it in entirely different terms, upon hearing the incident described by one person, the other may not recognize it as being the one he saw. Since the perceptual field cannot be observed directly by any other individual, it may appear that the frame of reference and the causes of behavior are so secret that actual prediction of behavior must be beyond any outsider's power. The truth of the matter, however, is that certain factors are commonly held by us all. It is probable that in any given audience there will be those people who perceive the world as you or I perceive it. In any case they will understand your description of reality as you perceive it and will be able to make some response in terms of their own experience. Sometimes their assumptions about your perception of reality may be warped or invalid. But there is at least some common ground which permits communication to take place. This is especially true among people of the same culture who hold in common many more potential elements of their perceptual fields and of their individual realities.

Thus, communication is possible through that commonly perceived part of the phenomenal field. For example, among most members of western society there are common gestures which make some com-

munication possible although the spoken languages may be different. However, they can do so only when the physical gesture has the same phenomenal significance. An American to whom a nod means assent will be unable to communicate with a Greek to whom a nod means negation—until the American discovers the meaning of the gesture in the Greek's perceptual field. It is not the physical nature but the perceived character of the action that is important in determining behavior. Therefore, we need to repeat that communication is essentially the process of acquiring a greater understanding of another person's perceptual field; that can take place only when some common characteristics already exist.

In speech, communication is possible only to the extent that the objective physical sounds or characters have the same meaning in the two fields. An American cattle dealer found his ability to communicate with a Scotish cattle raiser much enhanced as soon as he discovered that "coo" meant not only "cow," as he had inferred, but also "calf." Even the identical words often have different meanings in the perceptual field of different individuals. Strangers of the same general culture often have difficulty understanding each other, whereas old friends who have shared many experiences can understand each other's field well. They can communicate and anticipate the other's behavior without using words at all. The well known phenomenon of twins communicating with each other by using private language is possible because of the mutual nature of so much of their experience; there is an unusual correspondence between their perceptual fields. This often happens between husband and wife as well. People who have common experiences tend to have common tendencies in their behavior. Consequently one finds at a social gathering the skiers, the joggers, the businessmen, the people from the military, or those who have traveled to Europe forming in groups—despite the best efforts of the hostess to mix them up. We feel more comfortable with persons whose phenomenal fields have much in common with our own or, at least, whose fields we *assume* are similar to ours. Because we see alike we also are more likely to behave in similar ways and, thus, we can predict more easily what others will do and how they will react to our behavior. It is in and through this overlapping area of our respective perceptual fields that communication becomes feasible and meaningful.

A great many of our difficulties in communication seem to stem from our failures to recognize the importance of time in perceiving. The speaker who speaks too fast loses his audience and makes himself ineffective. His communication may fail because the audience has not had previous experience to perceive the new aspects made by the speaker. Since people form new perceptions largely from already

existing perceptions in their perceptual fields, the time required to grasp a new event will be affected by the existing field. For example, listening to a lecture on advanced calculus would leave most of us hopelessly unable to comprehend for lack of the proper differentiation at earlier periods in our lives.

At this point let us go back and recapitulate the assumption with which this article began, namely, that much of what is termed communication problems really are not technical problems of *communicating*, such as the speed (tempo) at which the communication is delivered, or the means (style) by which it is carried. Rather, it is a complex human system problem with its roots in *how much* and *how can people disclose* to each other what their perceptions of the world are like, and *how much can be received* by the recepients of the communication.

Thus, it seems that the key to one dimension of the communication dilemma lies in improved listening abilities. If we can develop skills in listening we shall stand a better chance of comprehending the world from which another person speaks. A truly empathic relationship is based on common reference points.

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